THE TRUE Interest of Families: OR, DIRECTIONS HOW PARENTS May be happy in their Children, AND CHILDREN In their PARENTS.

To which is annexed a Discourse about the Right Way of Improving our Time.

By a Divine of the Church of England.

With a Preface by

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

THE

PREFACE.

THE Author of the enſuing Treatiſe, having thought fit to recommend his Papers to my peruſal, I was willing to uſher them into the World, with ſome remarks upon his pious deſign, and the uſefulneſs of Tracts of this nature.

The plainneſs of the ſtile muſt be no diſcouragement to the Reader, nor muſt Truth be therefore laid by, becauſe it comes not dreſt in a Veſture of Gold, or wants the Curioſities of Embroidery.

Truth needs no borrow'd Beams,

its natural Light is enough to ſtrike the Senſes. If it be Truth, it is no matter whether it's preſented in an Earthen Veſſel, or in a Silver Diſh.

The ſerving of it up according to the Mode, may indeed pleaſe fickly Fancies, but is no great Charm or Motive to inquiſitive, or rational Men, who love Beauty without painting; and are more taken with the natural mixture of white and red, than with all the artificial Waſhes, which are uſed to make the Features amiable.

Plat. l. 2. de Republ. Ariſtot. l. 6. Politic. c. 1.

The Welfare of a Common-Wealth doth in a great meaſure depend upon the Duties of the Relatives here treated of, and did Parents and Children conſcientiouſly diſcharge all the Obligations incumbent upon them by the Law of God, and Nature, the World could not be ſo wicked as it is. Education makes the firſt impreſſions upon the Souls of Men, and

were

were care taken, that the ground be impregnated with good Seed, such a Harveſt might be expected from it, that Poſterity might be the better for it

I am ſenſible that Converſation and the Humour of the Age, is apt to make ſtrange alterations in the Principles we imbibe, yet ſomething will ſtick, and when the thoughts are cool, and Men come to reflect, the Principles they have learned when the wax was ſoft, will recoil, and oblige them to return to their Duty.

Of this we have experience; and though there is no rule ſo general, but admits of exceptions, yet it's enough that this effect doth frequently appear, which is no inconſiderable Motive to the ſerious conſideration of a thing of this importance.

It was a wiſe anſwer, which one of the LXXII. Interpreters *gave to* Ptolemæus Philadelphus, *who asked him, what was the greateſt negligence?* The neglect, *ſaith he,* of the good

Education of Children. *It is ſo, and the hurt that's done by it, both to them, and to the Publick, is unſpeakable.*

Whence is it that there are ſo many Prodigals? that ſo many come to an untimely end? that ſo many run into exceſſes, which deſtroy both Soul and Body? From want of pious Education.

It was a ſevere Cenſure, which Carneades *the Philoſopher paſſed upon the Children of Rich Men,* that they learned nothing but to ride well.

Indeed it is to be wondered, that Rational Creatures ſhould be ſo careful to breed up their Progeny to ſenſuality, and neglect the cultivation of that which makes them differ from Bruits, and ſhews, they are Creatures of a nobler extract: Can any thing be more reaſonable, than virtue and the fear of God? Is not this it, which both Scripture and Philoſophy teaches? Do not we our ſelves

confeſs

confeſs ſo much, and do not moſt Men acknowledge it when they come to dye? And yet that we ſhould make this the leaſt part of our care in the Education of Youth, is wondrous ſtrange!

Some ſeem to fancy, that ſending their Children to School, or to teach them their Catechiſm, is all the Care that is incumbent upon them. Though I cannot ſay, but that this is a Duty, yet it is ſo imperfect, that I can ſcarce honour it with the Title of doing it by halves, it being but the beginning, or the leaſt part of it. Inſtruction, Precept, and Example are the mighty Engines and Inſtruments in the promoting and accompliſhing this Work; and perhaps nothing hath a greater influence than Example; for all the Moral Precepts of the Parents, are like Water ſpilt upon the Ground, where Example doth not concomitate the inſtruction.

How ſhall the Child learn Sobrie-

ty, where the Father is often drunk? Or how is it poſſible, the young man ſhould be meek and patient, where the Father is Cholerick, and hath no command of his paſſion? I do not reſtrain the Grace of God, and am ſenſible, that the very impiety of the Parents hath ſometimes contrary Effects upon certain Children, and they learn to be good by the Wickedneſs of their Superiors; but this is an extraordinary Providence, which God exerts ſometimes to manifeſt his Omnipotence, and to let men ſee that he can bring light out of darkneſs, but the ordinary way of Edifying thoſe under our Charge, is to teach them by Example.

And though even this proves ineffectual ſometimes, yet it's enough that it is our Duty, and that we have diſcharged it, and have taken that way which was moſt rational, and of God's preſcription.

Hierom Ep. 7. ad Lætam. *I am ſo pleaſed with St. Jerom's Ad-*

vice to Læta *concerning the Education of her Daughter, that I cannot forbear to transcribe part of it.*

I will let you see, *saith he*, what Education you are to give to a Daughter, whose Soul ought to be the Temple of God. Let her hear nothing, learn nothing, speak nothing, but what may inspire the fear of God into her. Let her not listen to prophane Discourses, nor be enamoured with Love Songs or amorous Ditties. Let her use her self at certain hours, to sing Psalms; let none be about her, but sober Servants, and keep her from running into Company light and vain, where she will learn more ill than good. Use her to reading, and to work, and labour, and promise her Rewards, and incite her to Emulation; excite her to Virtue by praises and Commendations, and make her ambitious to excel others in Virtue and good Works. Let her learn

learn Scripture Sentences by heart, and chuſe her a Maſter, that may not only teach her to read, but inſtruct her in good manners. Give her a Nurſe neither debaucht nor tatling, nor given to ſtrong Liquors; and let her Habit be modeſt, and ſuch as becomes her Chriſtian Profeſſion. Let her not bore Holes in her Ears for Pendants, neither let her uſe any Paint or Waſh to beautifie her ſelf. Let her not be nice in ordering the Hair of her Head, neither ſuffer her to adorn her ſelf with Gold or Pearls or precious Stones, except you deſign her for Hell fire: When ſhe comes to riper age, let her go with her Parents to the Temple, but let her not return to the Gayeties of the World. Adviſe her to keep her ſelf in her Chamber, and let her not go to Feaſts, and merry Meetings. I would not have her uſe too much Faſting and Abſtinence, which

may hurt her health, at leaſt till ſhe be ſtronger, and better able to bear it. Let her uſe God's Creatures for neceſſity, and not for voluptuouſneſs ſake. Suffer her not to be at Muſical concerts, nor to be fond of Fiddles, and Lutes, and Harps, but let her repeat every day ſome paſſages out of the Word of God. Let her not go abroad any where without her Mother, nor be very familiar, or enter into intreagues with any Servant. Appoint her a Governeſs that's ſage and wiſe, and who may teach her to riſe at midnight, to ſing Praiſes to her God. Let her pray and work Day and Night. Teach her to handle her Needle, to ſpin and to exerciſe her ſelf in turning the Spindle. Suffer her not to imploy her ſelf in Imbroideries of Gold and Silver. Let her Clothes be plain and decent, and let her eat ſoberly and temperately, and let her not take plea-

I know what will be objected here, that this is the advice of a Hermit, *and to teach a Daughter how to be a* Nun. *But ſtill I appeal to any unprejudiced perſon, whether this be not the moſt likely way to Salvation, and whether theſe Precepts be not agreeable to the Goſpel of Chriſt? And though I will grant, that all are not under the ſame Circumſtances, and all cannot give the ſame Education; yet as to the principal part of the advice, which is to teach Children by Word and Example, how to die to Sin and to the World, it muſt be granted it's very practicable. This Age indeed hath learnt to ſhake off theſe ſtricter Rules, but they ſhould ſhew us too, what Warrant they have from the Word of God to do ſo.*

It was judiciouſly obſerved of Fabius, *that a* ſoft and effeminate Education, breaks the ſtrength of Body and Mind, *and whilſt we breed up Children to all the Arts*

of Vanity and Luxury, they continue ſtrangers to God and to themſelves.

The Vine *grows* wild, *if it be not cut; ſo doth* Youth, *if they be not betimes curbed in things which war againſt the Soul.*

Underſtand this, ye Parents, *and be inſtructed, ye to whom God hath committed the care of Education; ye are God's Stewards, and your Children are the Goods you are to manage to your Maſter's Glory. Their blood God will require at your hands. Have not ye read the Curſe God pronounced againſt* Eli *for his negligence, and are not ye afraid of the ſame Judgment? Ye are the perſons by whom your Children muſt be taught to ſerve God in their Generation; ye are the perſons from whom they are to learn their Duty to God and Man; at your door the fault will lie, if they miſcarry through your careleſneſs. Are their Souls ſo contemptible in your eyes, that you will let them periſh for want of Admonition? Did Chriſt think them*

worth

worth purchasing with his own Blood, and will ye let them lie without fence or wall, or cultivation?

You take care that they may live comfortably in this World: Is it not a greater Duty to bestir your selves, that they may enjoy God for ever? It is joy to you to see them do well here, and ought it not to be a greater joy to find, that they are like to reign with Christ and his Saints in a better World? You love them, but how doth it appear you do, while you let their Souls die? Is this your Love, to provide for their flesh, and to neglect enriching their better part with religious Principles? You would have them go to Heaven when they die; but how is it possible they should, when you are loth to be at the trouble to shew them the way that leads to that Paradise? Was ever any man saved without Holiness, and do you hope they will be, without this qualification? If you teach them not by Word and Example to practise that Holiness, how

can you or they hope to aſcend into the Mount of God, or dwell on the everlaſting Hills?

Do you believe a future Account, and do not ye enquire, whether you diſcharge your Duty to your Children? Or is this no part of the Account ye are to give? Ye are the perſons who are to breathe goodneſs into them, and to give them life and happineſs. Ye are their Gods, as it were, and from you they receive their motion; and their ſpiritual as well as their natural life muſt begin from you. Ye are Magiſtrates in your Families, and it is your Province to be a terrour to evil doers, and Encouragers of thoſe that do well.

If by your indulgence they ſin, and by your connivence they grow wicked, will not the ſupreme Judge be avenged on ſuch Officers? You blame Governours of a Commonwealth, if they do not animadvert on Offenders, or are regardleſs of the reins of Juſtice; and do not you blame your ſelves, who

who are Commanders in your Families, for ſuffering the fear of God to decay there, which is the only thing that can make them happy?

How is it, that you will not underſtand your intereſt? Is it not your intereſt to educate them into the Practice of Virtue, and Goodneſs, and Self-denial? If they love God, they muſt needs love you, that love will conſtrain them to expreſs their Duty to you. The Preſence of God will over-awe them, and they'l obey you, not with eye-ſervice, but when your eye is off from them. The fear of God will make them conſcientious of obeying your Commands in ſecret; and if your good Counſels and Examples prevail with them, they will be not only your Children, but the Children of God; and you will have this ſatisfaction, that you do not only love them, but that God loves them, and dwells in them, and they in him.

Remember this, ye that are Children, *and let this encourage you to*

a faithful discharge of your Duty. Your Parents, that under God gave you life, have a just Right to your Services and Obedience. You are born Servants to them, and to be at their beck and command is the obligation you bring with you into the World. As the Authority of Parents was the first Government in the World, so your subjection to them is the first Service that was ever known in the World. Can you think any thing too good for them, who are the great Instruments of conveying to you all the goods you possess, and all the endowments you are invested with?

If you follow not their good Instructions and Admonitions, ye are the greatest Rebels in the World, and the sin is as great a Treason in the Family you live in, as Sedition in a Kingdom is against the State. You have the noblest Promises made you to reward your Obedience; and though it is a natural Duty bound up with your very Being, yet God will reward

reward it as if it were a deliberate ſelf-denial; and becauſe you ſhall not ſtay for the recompence, God will bleſs you here, and your lives ſhall be comfortable on this ſide Heaven. It is the firſt Commandment in the Law with Promiſe; and to let you ſee how God delights in your honouring your Parents, and obeying their wholeſom Counſels, he hath ſingled out that Precept, and dreſs'd it with more than ordinary encouragements.

But then, the Honour you ſhew them, muſt not ſpend it ſelf in ſome outward Civilities, but muſt be expreſſed in Actions, in Speeches, and in Patience, according to the Advice of the Son of Syrach, Eccleſiaſtic. 3. 12, 13, 14.

In Actions, ſo as to execute their lawful Commands with great alacrity and fidelity, to labour, and to take pains for their maintenance and ſupport, if they are fallen to decay, and to relieve their neceſſities, according to your ability.

In

In Words and Speeches, ſo as to ſpeak honourably of them, to anſwer them with humility, to comfort them when they are in trouble, and to pacifie them with ſoft language, when they are angry and diſpleaſed.

In Patience, ſo as to bear their anger patiently, and to endure their frowardneſs and pettiſhneſs without contradiction; to receive their ſeverer Commands, and ſuch as are contrary to your genius and inclination, with gentleneſs, and to do them without murmuring.

Theſe are Duties which draw more than ordinary Bleſſings upon you, God that ſees you do ſo, will have thoughts of peace towards you; he will be concerned for you, and you may be confident, he will not leave you, nor forſake you.

In honouring your Parents, you honour your ſelves. It's that which will not only procure you favour with God, but with men too. It's upon this account, that Wiſe men have recorded the Dutifulneſs of ſome excellent

cellent Children, and made them immortal by their Writings; and there are ſuch Examples of this filial Reſpect, even among the Heathen, that it would be odious and dreadful, if the Children of Chriſtians ſhould fall ſhort of their Duty.

God lays ſo great a ſtreſs upon it, that as he promiſes the kindeſt things to it, ſo he threatens as ſevere puniſhments, where it is neglected; and that he doth not only threaten, but execute theſe Judgments, any man may ſee, that will take notice of his Providences. But all this the Reader will be more fully convinced of, by reading the following Diſcourſe, which, that God may bleſs with ſucceſs and edification, ſhall be my hearty Prayer.

A. Horneck.

ADVICE

TO

PARENTS.

BY

A Divine of the Church of *England*.

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ADVICE

ADVICE TO PARENTS.

PART I.

IT has been always reckoned by the beſt and wiſeſt men, a thing abſolutely neceſſary towards a Reformation in the World, to begin with the Inſtruction and right Education of Children; thoſe of elder Years being ordinarily ſo rooted and hardned in their ſinful habits, that, for the moſt part, there's very little can be done to reform them, and make them better. So ſenſible were ſome ancient States of this, that they made particular Laws for educating Chil-

dren; thinking it too great a Truſt, to leave it altogether in the Power of Parents, to train up their Children according to their Humour and Fancy. Amongſt Chriſtians, there are few reſtraints upon Parents; in moſt Countries it being in their power to Educate their Children as they think good: It is therefore of no ſmall importance for them to know what their Duty is, that they may approve themſelves to God, in doing whatever he requires towards their Children, for their Souls, their Bodies, and their outward Eſtate.

The deſign of this Treatiſe is, to furniſh thoſe who want ſuch helps with ſome plain and eaſie directions, that they may know how to act the part of Chriſtian Parents.

How Parents ought to be affected while Children are yet in the Womb.

While Children are yet in the Womb, it is the Duty of Parents to endeavour to bring their mind to an indifferency, as to the Sex which ſhall be born; not to preſcribe to God, by their impatient deſires, and their bold asking of him, a Child of this or that Sex; but to leave it entirely to his Will and Pleaſure, to do what he thinks

thinks best. The happiness of Parents does not consist in having Children of this or that Sex: Sometimes Sons (who are most desired ordinarily) may prove useless in the World, yea very hurtful in many regards; they may occasion great grief of Heart, and lasting Anguish and Vexation to their Parents, by their mad and foolish Courses, and wicked doings: And on the other hand, Daughters may prove great Blessings in the World, great Comforts to their Parents, and great Examples of Piety and of Zeal for the honour of God: On which Accounts Parents ought to resign their will to God, and be ready with all gratitude to accept whatever he bestows.

How they ought to be affected when their Children are born.

Secondly, When a Child is born, Parents ought with all thankfulness to return praise and thanks to God, who hath bestowed such a Blessing on them, giving them a living Child, sound and perfect in all its parts and proportions, without either defect of necessary parts, or excess and deformity thereof. This should make them admire and adore the Powerful and Wise Providence of

God, which appears in framing and fashioning their Infant, so curiously and wonderfully in the Womb, preserving it, and making it grow up, from a very small and imperfect beginning, to such a bigness, with all those comely shapes and proportions which they behold.

They ought to look upon their Children as given them of God, to be taken care of both as to their Souls and Bodies; to be bred up in his fear, for his Honour and Glory; to be made fit to serve him here, and to live with him for ever hereafter.

The Soul being the chiefest part of the charge committed to Parents, I shall first shew what they ought to do for their Childrens Souls.

The first Duty of Parents for the Souls of their Children, is, to consecrate them to God in Baptism.

First, They ought to consecrate their Children to God in Baptism, so soon as conveniently they can: They cannot better express their gratitude to God for blessing them with Children, than by presenting them to him again in this holy Ordinance; that he may

set

ſet his Seal upon them, and admit them into his Houſe and Family; that he may beſtow upon them the priviledges of his Children, and give them a Right and Title to the Bleſſedneſs, the Grace and Glory purchaſed by Jeſus Chriſt. It is for this End that Baptiſm is inſtituted; not only to be a Ceremony of Admiſſion into the Church, but to ſeal unto us the pardon of our Sins, to aſſure us of the Divine Favour, to make us Members of Chriſt, Heirs of God, and Inheritours of the Kingdom of Heaven, if we by wilful impenitency and unbelief, do not afterwards hinder and fruſtrate the Virtue thereof. It is not neceſſary for Parents to enquire how ſuch things are done by Baptiſm: it is enough for them to know, That Baptiſm is appointed for thoſe Ends, and we are ſure that God appoints nothing in vain: Our Saviour is ſaid, *Eph.* 5. 26. *To ſanctify and cleanſe his Church with the waſhing of water by the Word.* And, *Tit.* 3. 5. he is ſaid *to ſave us by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt.* And in the 22*d.* of the *Acts* and 16. it is ſaid by *Ananias* unto *Paul*, *Ariſe and be baptized, and waſh away thy Sins:* And ſays St. *Peter*, 1 *Epiſt.* 3. 21.

The like Figure whereunto, even Baptiſm doth now alſo ſave us (not the putting away of the filth of the Fleſh, but the anſwer of a good Conſcience towards God,) by the Reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt. And St. *Paul* tells us, *Gal.* 3. 27. *As many of you as have been baptized into Chriſt, have put on Chriſt:* Which words import not only our owning and acknowledging him as the Saviour of the World, who alone is able to waſh and cleanſe us with his Blood, but alſo our profeſſing our reſolution to live holy lives, to walk in newneſs of life according to his Example; in token of which in the ancient Church, they who were baptized, were preſently cloathed with White Rayment, to teſtify their reſolution to live in holineſs, and to put off the Old Man, that is, all their former wicked Deeds and Cuſtoms, and filthy Practices. Likewiſe, *Rom.* 6. 3, and 4. it is thus written, *Know ye not that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptiſm into Death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed up from the dead by the glory of the Father; even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of Life.* Theſe words

words import not only our belief of a crucified Saviour, who dyed and was buried for ſin, to ſave us from it; but alſo our Repentance, whereby we renounce ſin, as dead and buried to it for the time to come. The general Deſign of this Sacrament, being ſufficiently plain and clear from theſe and other Scriptures; it is to little purpoſe, (and oftentimes it proves to very ill purpoſe) to enquire any further as to particulars; for by ſo doing, a great many perſons judging of divine things by their own weak and fooliſh apprehenſions, have reaſoned themſelves (if I may ſo ſpeak) both out of their Reaſon and Religion.

2. *Duty, to ſeaſon their Minds betimes with good Impreſſions.*

Secondly, When Children begin to ſpeak and to diſcover ſome dawnings of Reaſon, it is fit to ſeaſon their Minds with ſome good Thoughts, with ſome divine Impreſſions, that Religion betimes may catch hold of their tender and innocent Minds, before they are corrupted and defiled with bad Principles, and vain & unreaſonable Opinions,

which they are apt to learn too ſoon from evil Company. Teach them who made them; who dyed for them; for what end they were made; whither good Children go when they dye, and whither naughty Children go; what a place Heaven is, and Hell, &c. Theſe and ſuch like plain and eaſie things are to be told them, which they can underſtand, and which may make ſome impreſſion on their minds. In teaching Children ſuch matters, it is neceſſary to condeſcend to their weak capacity: It is not fit to ask them ſuch Queſtions at all times, nor yet to ſay too much to them at any one time: Such Inſtructions are to be dropt into their minds ſoftly and leiſurely, ſo as not to oppreſs them, but to recreate them; not to be a burden to them, but a pleaſure. It cannot be expreſſed how great Advantages attend ſuch early Inſtructions; theſe are the Seeds of Virtue, which take root inſenſibly, and ſpring up ſometimes very unexpectedly; the Impreſſions which they make continue a great while, as Earthen Veſſels retain the ſavour of that Liquor which was firſt put into them a long time after: So powerful are theſe firſt Inſtructions, that they are able to conquer

quer even Nature it ſelf. The famous *Lycurgus* made this appear, by bringing into the Market-place two Dogs of one Litter, and preſenting before them a Pot of Pottage and a Hare; one of them (which was trained up in Hunting) run after the Hare; and the other (which was brought up in the Houſe) fell to the Pottage. What a wonderful power may we daily obſerve in thoſe early impreſſions which are made on mens minds? Thereby it comes to paſs, that the moſt abſurd and extravagant Opinions, which have been ſuck'd in, when one was young, can hardly be removed by the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt Reaſonings.

3. *Duty, to teach them to pray.*

Thirdly, Teach them, ſo ſoon as may be, to pray to God Morning and Evening; To ſay after you, or others whom you appoint for that purpoſe, two or three ſhort Petitions, which are eaſie to be underſtood; and as their Underſtanding and Capacity increaſeth, teach them the Lord's Prayer; and after that ſome larger Form of Prayer, which they may ſay after

you, till they can read it themſelves, or get it by heart.

You are to have a ſpecial care, that they perform their Devotions in as grave and ſerious a manner as their years can admit: You are to keep them from all ſorts of indecent Actions and Poſtures, when they ſay their Prayers: For this end, you are to teach them who it is they ſpeak to when they pray, and what theſe things mean, which they pray for.

Chuſe the fitteſt times for them, wherein to ſay their Prayers: as in the Morning, when-ever they ariſe; while their Spirits are moſt vigorous, and their Thoughts moſt free. At Night let them ſay their Prayers rather before Supper than after; becauſe after Supper, they are more apt to be very dull and ſleepy, and thereby leſs fit for ſuch a performance. God is not to be ſerved with the refuſe of our thoughts, and with ſluggiſh ſleepy deſires; but with our beſt and moſt lively affections, and with the ſtrength and fervour of our deſires.

You are to prevent their omitting their Prayers at any one time; becauſe doing ſo once or twice, they are apt

to neglect them wholly, or to return to them with great averſneſs: Whereas Cuſtom and Conſtancy in performing their Devotions, will make them much more eaſie and pleaſant to them.

When they are poſſeſſed with more perfect and ſolid thoughts about Religion, with ſtronger and more lively impreſſions of Divine things, and are able without great difficulty to expreſs the ſenſe of their Souls; They may do what they find does ſerve beſt the great purpoſes of Devotion: If praying without reſtraining themſelves to any particular Form of Words, contribute more to their fervency and elevation of mind in Prayer, let them pray without uſing a Form: But if they find that their Minds are more ſtayed and fixed, and their fervency and devotion greater in the uſe of a Form than without it, let them do that which they find beſt.

When they pray for outward and temporal things, teach them to do it with an entire ſubmiſſion to the Will of God, who hath promiſed periſhing things conditionally, that is, ſo far as he ſees the beſtowing of them will be for his Glory, and the good of his Chil-

Children: Therefore they must not be vehement and importunate in their desires and Prayers for such things, but ought to pray for them with great humility and resignation to the Divine Will. As for spiritual Blessings, to wit, the pardon of Sin, the direction and assistance of the Spirit of God, his Grace to help them in time of need, power and strength to fight against the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, *&c.* These things are to be prayed for with all the importunity and earnestness that is possible. The more vehement and fervent their desires and Prayers are for such things, the more acceptable are they to God, and the more likely to obtain from him the desires of their Souls; for he hath promised to satisfie the longing Soul with good things.

4. *Duty, to observe carefully their temper and disposition, and to endeavour to reform what is amiss therein.*

Fourthly, Observe carefully their Temper and Disposition, what Vices they are most inclined to; If they are sturdy and proud, peevish and passionate,

nate, cunning, given to lying, flattery, and diſſimulation; if they are conceited, raſh, and unadviſed, *&c.* Endeavour all you can to bend their minds another way: For Example, if they are ſturdy and proud, ſtrive to humble them, and break them, to tame their proud Spirits; accuſtom them to the doing acts of humility; do not gratifie them in thoſe things that are apt to make them proud; cauſe them to yield, and to ſubmit to your Will, or to the Will of others, whom you think fit they ſhould obey.

If you find them peeviſh and paſſionate, teach them to be meek and gentle; to be of a ſweet and mild diſpoſition; to love thoſe who have done or ſaid ſomewhat that croſſed them; not to ſeek revenge, but to forgive them, and to be kind to them; to be ready, when they have occaſion, to do them good for evil.

If they be given to Lying, ſhew them the evil of it, that a lying Tongue is an abomination to the Lord, *Prov.* 6. 17. That the Devil is the Father of Lyars, and that they are in the number of thoſe that are ſhut out of the new *Jeruſalem*, and have their part in the

the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone, *Rev.* 21. 8. and 22. 15. Shew them how great hurt it will do them, and what ſhame it will bring upon them; That if they be found Lyars, people will not believe them, even when they ſpeak Truth. Encourage them to confeſs their faults, if they have done any thing amiſs; be apt to pardon them when they confeſs, and tell the Truth; and commend them for doing ſo: But if you find them in a Lye, be ſure to chaſtiſe them for it, eſpecially if they have done it oftner than once. Nothing tends more to the ſpoiling of Children, than their getting into ſuch a habit: This is a Vice that grows up apace, if not timely cured by good Education; Thereby they learn to grow ſo falſe and diſingenuous, that they are not fit to be truſted or employed.

If you find them to be of too prodigal a Temper, apt to be too profuſe in their Expences; ready to throw away their Money upon Trifles, and when there is no reaſonable occaſion for it; you ought by all prudent and proper Methods to endeavour to make them a little more diſcreet and careful;

ful; That they waſte nothing in vain, that may be of uſe to poor people; That they do not throw away that which may do good at ſome time or other. Suggeſt often to them, that we are Stewards of whatever God beſtows upon us, that he will call us to an account; and that therefore we ought to employ to good purpoſe all thoſe good things he gives us. Shew them what our Saviour ſaid to his Diſciples, after he had fed five thouſand men with five Loaves and two Fiſhes, *Joh.* 6. 12. *When they were filled, he ſaid unto his Diſciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be loſt.* He would not have any thing loſt, or thrown away unneceſſarily, which might be uſeful afterwards to one or other.

If you find them of a covetous Temper, endeavour to enlarge their thoughts by the Principles of Chriſtian Charity: Shew them what an excellent thing it is to do good; to ſhew mercy and kindneſs; to make peoples hearts glad: Accuſtom them to the doing ſuch kind and charitable offices; for which end, give them now and then money, and other things to beſtow on

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those who are poor and needy. Shew them the evil of Covetousness; that it's the root of all evil, that it takes the heart off from God, and rendereth it unfit for the consideration of Divine things, and for all worthy and useful designs; that it disposeth a man for the basest and vilest actions and undertakings, as it did *Judas* to betray his Lord; That it bereaves him of true repose and satisfaction of mind, and pierceth him through with many sorrows, 1 *Tim.* 6. 9, 10.

If you perceive them to be naturally melancholy, and fearful of every little thing, endeavour to chear up their Spirits: Suggest to them such considerations, and possess them with such Maxims and Principles, as tend to fortifie their minds against those things which are apt to make them uneasie, and are the occasion of their fear. If their distemper proceed from some bodily indisposition, as oft-times it does, use such helps as are necessary: When such evil habits of body are once rooted and strongly fixed, and when the blood and spirits are deeply infected therewith, they are a very grievous clog to the Soul, and a great hindrance

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to that chearfulneſs and liberty of Spirit, wherewith people ought always to endeavour to ſerve God.

If you ſee them to be of too gay and airy a Temper, ſo that they cannot fix and be ſtayed at any time, you are to uſe a great deal of prudence and diſcretion to compoſe and ſettle their Spirits; See that they uſe their Wit and Fancy without giving offence, and that they hurt no body by indecent reflections: Let them by no means take liberty to indulge their humour in jeſting about things that are Sacred, or that have any relation thereto: But you are to take heed leſt your endeavouring to cure one fault, occaſion another; leſt your ſtriving to deliver them from one extream, drive them to the contrary, that is, leſt inſtead of their being too gay, you make them melancholy and dull: Their Wit and Spirit is not to be rooted out, but reformed and rightly managed; for this may be of uſe for ſeaſoning and ſweetning Converſation.

If you obſerve them to be raſh and forward, ready to ſpeak and act without due conſideration; ſtrive to make them more cautious and circumſpect;

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to reflect and think a little more, on what they say and do; lest otherwise, they fall into a habit of speaking and acting impertinently and indiscreetly: when they say or do a foolish thing, for lack of consideration, then take occasion to make them sensible what a shame it is for them to do so; what a reproach to those who are reasonable Creatures, to speak and act like fools without Reason and Understanding: Shew them some of the bad consequences which attend speaking and acting in this manner.

Thus you are to make it your Business to consider what are their defects and faults, and to do all that you can to cure them thereof, and to direct them in the ways of Wisdom and Virtue.

5. *Duty, to see that they be taught to Read.*

Fifthly, When once they are of an Age fit for it, see that they be taught to read, that thereby they may be able to make use of the Holy Bible. If your condition in the World is such, as disables you from doing much for them

them as to their outward Eſtate; yet if you do this, it may prove (unleſs it be their own fault) of unſpeakable advantage to them, and in ſome ſenſe better than a great Portion. It is ſad to ſee how a great many beſtow readily enough on their Children, to learn a gainful Trade, that they may get Wealth: And yet they are very unwilling to give a little money to one to teach them to read that ſacred Book, which inſtructs them in the Art of being happy; how to be ſaved; how to obtain a Crown of Glory; to purchaſe a Kingdom which cannot be ſhaken; to obtain a Pearl of greateſt price, and enduring Subſtance. The Word of God doth teach us all this; *It's given to make us Wiſe to Salvation, that we may make our Calling and our Election ſure*; and therefore neglect not to do this for them, to teach them to read: And when they can do it, cauſe them every day to read more or leſs in that Sacred Book: See that they do it with great Reverence, as being the Word of God: Cauſe them to conſider who it is that ſpeaketh to them therein; and what it is that he commands, promiſes, or threatens; direct them

them at first to read such places, as are most easie to be understood, and which are apt to make the deepest impressions: After they have read, see what they remember; cause them to tell you what they can call to mind: Explain to them so far as you are able, what they do not know; especially in such things as are most useful to make them wiser and better. Appoint them now and then a verse or two, to get by heart; cause them to repeat them with due gravity; let them not do it in a trifling manner, as if they were telling a silly Story. Do not appoint them too many things to be got by heart; for this will do more hurt than good: A few things well understood do better than a great many by rote.

Great care ought to be taken what Books they read.

Be careful lest they read any Books which tend to poyson their minds, to fill them with false Opinions, or to lead them to bad practices: Their tender minds are apt very quickly to be corrupted by such Treatises. Even they who are of a more fixed and solid Virtue, are in danger of receiving hurt by reading such Books; especially when

when they are writ with great Art, and when their Notions are repreſented in fair and Beautiful Colours; They are apt to impreſs on the fancy ſome Images of no good conſequence to the Soul: How great need therefore have Parents to reſtrain their Children from reading ſuch Books as tend to pollute their innocent and chaſte minds, which are capable of receiving any ſort of impreſſions either good or bad?

As for Books of Devotion; great care is to be taken, that only ſuch be put into their hands as are writ in a plain and eaſie ſtyle; which treat of things fit and needful to be known by them; and which are moſt likely to make them Wiſe and Good. They are to be accuſtomed to the Writings of thoſe who are Men of greateſt Moderation; who do not impoſe their own conceits, as neceſſary Rules of Devotion; who do not require ſuch things as abſolutely needful to be done, which God hath not declared to be ſo; nor yet who ſhorten the Rule, by cutting off ſuch things as God hath injoyned us: All Books which lead men to extreams, are carefully to be avoided; and ſuch Treatiſes are to be made

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uſe of, as contain the plain and neceſſary Doctrines of Chriſtianity; which tend to inſpire Men with the Spirit of Purity, of Truth, of Peace and Love; which promote Sincerity, Juſtice, Temperance, Charity, Meekneſs, Humility, Patience, Reſignation to the will of God in all things, Zeal for his Honour and Glory, a firm belief and truſt in him, *&c.*

When it is requiſite to acquaint them with the different Opinions amongſt Proteſtants, that their minds may not be unfixed and unſettled, when they go abroad into the World; be ſure not to put into their hands ſuch Tracts as are writ with a fiery uncharitable Spirit, and in a dogmatick and magiſterial manner; but ſuch as are writ with great Temper and Moderation; which tend to heal the Church of all Contentions and Diviſions, and not to kindle and increaſe them; which do not load Mens Opinions with unjuſt, extravagant, and impious conſequences, which never entred into the minds of thoſe who vouched them: but ſuch as make fair and favourable conſtructions, and juſt allowances. Such Practices are chiefly to be choſen for them, which diſpoſe

poſe Men to be humble and modeſt; not to be ſtiff and pertinacious in their own private Sentiments; not raſhly and ſeverely to condemn others who have different thoughts; and never on the account of any ſuch particular Opinions to break the peace of Chriſtian Society; nor to grow more cold in their reſpect and affection towards thoſe who have not the ſame thoughts with themſelves in leſſer matters. They are as it were, to feed upon Books of this ſort, and carefully to digeſt them.

6. *Duty, to bring them to the place of publick Worſhip ſo ſoon as they are fit for it.*

Sixthly, You are to bring them to the place of publick Worſhip ſo ſoon as they are fit for it, that they may have the benefit of the Prayers of God's People, and may learn, as they are capable, ſomewhat that may make them wiſer and better. Take heed how they carry themſelves in the Houſe of God, that it be with all poſſible ſilence and reverence; and that they perform their publick Devotions in a decent manner. When they come from Church, ſee what they remember; if they have got any

any thing by heart, encourage them: If they remember nothing, you may tell them ſomewhat or other of the Sermon which is fit for them to learn. Endeavour by their conſtant attendance on the publick Worſhip, to beget in them a mighty regard thereto, as being one great means appointed of God to increaſe in them, true Knowledge and Piety. Let them not ſpend the reſt of the Lords day in rambling about; but ſo far as their age can bear it, let them be imployed uſefully.

7. *Duty, to make them underſtand their Baptiſmal Covenant.*

Seventhly, Do all that you can to make them underſtand their Baptiſmal Covenant; and if there be opportunity to own and renew it publickly and ſolemnly, fail not to encourage their doing it. It's of great importance for them, to make a ſolemn profeſſion of their Faith, and to declare their Reſolution of performing their Baptiſmal Promiſe: It is of great advantage to them, at ſuch an occaſion, to have the Prayers of the Church, and particularly of thoſe, who are appointed of God,

God, to bleſs the People. It is true, the great abuſes which have been committed in the performance of this ancient Ceremony, have made many people to ſlight and neglect it; but if Confirmation were performed with that care and ſeriouſneſs, which ought to be uſed on ſuch an occaſion, it is a cuſtom which might be of marvellous benefit in the Church; both to ſtir up Parents to inſtruct their Children, and Miniſters to Catechiſe them, and acquaint them with thoſe things that are needful for them to know, to believe, and to do. The careful and Religious uſe of it, would tye Children more ſtrictly to mind the great concerns of their Souls; it would afford them occaſion to conſider what it is to have been baptiſed, and to be a Chriſtian: It would work in them a more powerful ſenſe of the Obligations of Chriſtianity; and make them more careful to live up to that holy Religion, whereof they made ſo publick a profeſſion: It would make them more afraid to do bad things, againſt which they had proteſted ſo ſolemnly. And not only fear, but ſhame in this caſe, would reſtrain them from doing wickedly. This

would be to young People a great defence againſt Temptations: Bad men would not ſo boldly ask them to ſin, if they knew they had openly and ſolemnly diſowned and renounced them, and all their wicked Courſes; and if they were tempted, they would be more apt to ſay in their own minds; Shall we do ſuch wicked things, and run the hazard of being Covenant-breakers, and perjured perſons? Shall we commit ſuch Villanies, and practice ſuch Abominations, and thereby break our ſolemn Vow and Engagement? Shall we by our folly and impiety give occaſion of offence and ſcandal to the Church of Chriſt, which he hath purchaſed with his Blood? Shall we renounce the Captain of our Salvation, and prove Deſerters, who have ſo lately vowed *to renounce the Devil and all his Works*? What a mighty defence would this be to your Children, when aſſaulted by the fiery Darts of the Devil, the Vanities of the World, and the luſts of their own deceitful hearts; to conſider, that by their own actual Conſent, they have renounced all theſe, and given up themſelves into the hands of God, to be kept by his mighty Power, through

through Faith unto Salvation? They have vowed, and they ought to perform it, to keep his righteous Judgments. These things being impartially considered, should mightily excite Parents to see that their Children do openly and solemnly profess their Faith in Christ crucified; their resolution to obey him, to serve him, and love him, to fight under his Banner, against sin, the Devil, and the World, and to continue his Faithful Souldiers and Servants unto their lives end. Is not this your Glory, that your Children are Christians? and do you think it a shame or dishonour for you or them, if they make a solemn profession of their Christianity; that they avow their Religion, and will by Gods help make good the promise which was made in their Name in Baptism? Of so great importance is this Custom, that the greatest men amongst the Reformers did highly commend it, and did earnestly wish that it might be restored, as a thing of great use towards the reviving the true Spirit of Christianity.

8. *Duty, to encourage them to come to the Lord's Table.*

Eighthly, When they are fit for it, you ſhould encourage them to come to the Table of the Lord, that they may be ſtrengthened in their moſt holy Faith, and further aſſured of the love of God; that they may make a publick profeſſion of their Chriſtianity, of their love to their Lord and Maſter Jeſus, of their Charity to all Men, and of their ſincere affection to thoſe who are Chriſts Members and Followers: They ought to make uſe of this holy Sacrament, that their love to their deareſt Lord and Saviour may be kindled and enflamed, by remembring his Love, and ſhewing forth his Death; that they may bind themſelves more ſtrictly to ſerve and obey him, and to fulfil their Baptiſmal Engagement. How glad ſhould Parents be to ſee their Children advanced to this honour, to eat and drink at their Lord's Table, to partake of ſo great a Teſtimony of his Kindneſs and Friendſhip? How earneſtly ſhould they encourage them to embrace this opportunity of renewing their Covenant with the

the Lord, to live and to dye his faithful Servants? Do you not desire to have them saved, to have them delivered from their Lusts and Passions, their Pride and Revenge, Uncharitableness and Malice, their Hatred and Envy, and from all manner of Sin and Folly, to be made pure and clean in Heart and Life, to be made meet for that holy place, where no unclean thing can enter? Do you not desire that their Sins may be blotted out, that they may be washed with the Blood of their Saviour? And yet do you not advise and entreat them for their Souls Health and Safety, to come to the Holy Communion, which is designed for these excellent and great Ends and Purposes? But, alas! how far are too many Parents from doing this for their Children? How many do either wholly, or for the most part, neglect and slight this holy Ordinance themselves, as if our Lord had without any just or necessary ground appointed it? How can such Persons expect the precious Fruits of the Death of Christ, who will not remember his Death, when he so lovingly and kindly calls and invites them to do it? *Do this in remembrance of me.* What a

great Argument is it of a wonderful decay of true Piety and Religion in the World, when Men do thus despise and set at naught the kindness of their Lord and Saviour? When they refuse to do a thing, so just and reasonable, and so easie as this is; which tends so much to his Glory and their own true Happiness and Welfare, both here and hereafter?

9. *Duty, to take care that they accustom themselves to Self-Examination.*

Ninthly, When they are fit for it, see that they accustom themselves to Self-Examination, that they spend a few moments every night (if another time of the day be not more convenient for them to do it in,) in calling themselves to an account; That they may see what good or what evil they have done; That they may give praise and thanks unto God for any thing they have done, which was good and right; and that they may confess their Sins and Follies, begging his gracious pardon;

and

and renewing their purpoſes and reſolutions to do better for the time to come.

But beſides theſe daily ſhort Reviews of their Heart and Life, 'tis fit to call upon them when they are well advanced in years, to a more ſtrict and ſolemn Examination of themſelves; to Prayer and Faſting, as their Age and Strength can bear it. This may be done once a Month, or once in two Months, or once a Quarter at leaſt. As to their abſtinence from Food on ſuch days, there's no Rule can be given to ſerve all perſons; if they can faſt one meal or two, it is well; if not, then they may eat leſs at a time, and of ſuch things as are leſs apt to be a hinderance to their Devotion: That is to be done that ſerves moſt to render them fit for Prayer and Meditation. It will be convenient in order to their doing this to good purpoſe, to be directed to a method, that ſo their Thoughts may not wander and be unfixed: For which end, it will be of good uſe, to have the direction of their Miniſter, if he be a diſcreet and good Man, or of ſome other prudent ſerious Chriſtian Friend:

Or you may recommend to them ſome plain and eaſie ſhort Treatiſe on this Subject, ſuch as you ſhall find written diſcreetly with due moderation of Spirit.

There is not any one method can be preſcribed for all perſons, nor fit for all times: But in general, upon ſuch days it's fit for them to begin with Prayer to God, humbly begging the Divine Aſſiſtance and Direction; that he may open their eyes to ſee their ſin and folly; and to diſcover his mercy and kindneſs, his long ſuffering and patience towards them, that they may be thereby led to Repentance.

They may next enquire particularly and ſtrictly into their ways and doings; which they may do, by conſidering what have been their thoughts, their words and deeds; each of which they are to examine according to the Rule of God's Word: Or, (which comes to the ſame thing) they may go over the Commandments, and ſee wherein they have broken any of them: Wherein they find themſelves guilty, they are with unfeigned ſorrow and inward contrition, to confeſs it, to mourn for it, and earneſtly to beg forgiveneſs of God; reſolving

ſolving with full purpoſe of heart, to do ſo no more; but to ceaſe from evil, and to learn to do well. They are to conſider what Temptations they are moſt in danger of; that they may avoid them: They are alſo to conſider what courſe they muſt take, and what Chriſtian Methods they muſt uſe, to overcome their evil Inclinations, and fooliſh and bad Cuſtoms; and they are to reſolve to govern themſelves accordingly; and ſincerely to endeavour to go on unto perfection. After this, they may reflect on the kind Providences they have met with; that their Souls may be filled with a grateful ſenſe thereof; that they may return all praiſe and thanks to God for his mercy and love; and may be excited for the time to come, to truſt more firmly in him, and to depend upon him. They may particularly conſider, wherein God hath been pleaſed to anſwer their Prayers, and to grant them the good things they have asked of him for their Souls and Bodies, for themſelves or for others; that their Piety and Love to God may be thereby the more kindled, and their Devotion excited; that their Faith and Hope may be made more ſtrong and lively.

They may take notice likewiſe of the Corrections and Chaſtiſements, wherewith God hath thought fit to exerciſe them; that thereby they may be awakened from ſin, and made wiſer and better for the time to come.

It will be very uſeful for them to have a Note in writing of thoſe various particulars; that they may on ſuch days review them, and with the more eaſe make ſuch Reflections on them, as tend to their improvement in real Piety.

Beſides theſe Acts of Devotion, which concern themſelves immediately; it will be fit on ſuch days to make earneſt and hearty Prayers to God for all Mankind; for the Converſion of *Jews*, *Turks* and *Pagans*: For the Reformation of thoſe Chriſtian Countries that are corrupted with Superſtition and Idolatry; for Union amongſt thoſe that are divided in their Opinions about leſſer matters; for deliverance to thoſe who are perſecuted for Righteouſneſs ſake; and for theſe Lands, (that God may inſpire us with a Spirit of Peace, of Love, and of true Piety;) For our King and Queen; for all Judges and Magiſtrates; for all the Miniſters of the Goſpel;

Gospel; for all their Friends and Relations; for all their Enemies, and for all who desire their Prayers; of whom it is not unfit to keep a particular Note in writing, that this Christian Office may be performed towards them with all faithfulness and kindness.

They are next to consider, what may be done by them for the honour of God and the good of Men; and are to resolve to do some Act or other of Piety or Charity, which may be of real advantage to Mens Souls or Bodies.

One thing more I shall mention, which may be very useful on such days; and that is, That they consider what are the things wherein they desire more earnestly the divine Assistance and Direction; which they may write down distinctly, that they may renew their Petitions therein every day. And thereafter, especially on such days as they appoint for more solemn Reflection and Humiliation, they may consider what Answers God has been pleased to afford them.

These are a few General Heads on this Subject, which may be of great advantage, in order to the promoting of true Devotion: But the designed brevi-

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ty of this Treatiſe does not permit the enlarging upon them.

10. *Duty, to obſerve what Providences they meet with, and to acquaint them therewith in due time.*

Laſtly, Conſider what Providences they meet with, what ſignal Mercies and Favours their merciful Father beſtoweth upon them; what Dangers and Hazards they have eſcaped; wherein God's kindneſs and mighty power has appeared towards them, in preſerving them, and keeping them alive: Keep a Note thereof in writing; that ſo when they come to be of age, you may acquaint them therewith, that they may therein read the loving kindneſs and tender Mercies of the Lord, and his wonderful goodneſs and favour towards them; and may be excited to be thankful, and to put their truſt and confidence in him, whoſe Mercies are over all his Works. But, alas! How far are moſt Parents from doing this? Very few do any ſuch thing for themſelves; the Mercies of God are renewed to them every morning, they live at his coſt and charge, he gives them richly all things

things to enjoy; all their good things are from him alone: But how little do they conſider, and take notice of the Hand of God, in thoſe many and great benefits he loads them with every hour and moment? They do not reflect upon the great and marvellous things that he does for them; they live as if they were altogether inſenſible of God's mercies and loving kindneſſes; and no wonder if they take little thought to poſſeſs their Children with any Impreſſions of that whereof they have no ſenſe themſelves.

Some Directions to Parents, how to render their Endeavours effectual.

1. They muſt give their Children good Example.

Now, to render your Admonitions and all other Endeavours effectual, for the good of your Children; Firſt, you muſt give them good Example; when you bid them read or pray, or partake of the Holy Sacrament, or attend the publick Worſhip, &c. you muſt do (ſo far as is needful and fit) the ſame things your ſelves: This will make your Admonitions ſucceſsful: Children learn more by

by the eye than by the ear. If they ſee you do contrary to what you adviſe them, they will be apt to think you do not believe what you ſay; or that you are very cruel and unmerciful towards them, to bind heavy burdens upon them, and not to touch them your ſelves; and if you ſhould conſtrain your Children to do what you do not your ſelves; what would it ſignify? It would only make them Hypocrites and Diſſemblers, to do that which they have no heart unto, and which they are not perſuaded to be their Duty. Such Children, when once the reſtraint and force which is upon them is removed, will be ſure to give themſelves the full ſwing in all manner of Folly; they will do thoſe things which they have ſeen in you, and learned by your Example.

2. They muſt chuſe good Company for them.

2*dly*. Chuſe good Company for your Children, (ſo far as you have opportunity and ability to do it,) otherwiſe, neither your Admonitions nor Examples will ſignifie much: Their ordinary Company, if naughty, will pull down faſter than you are able to build: Corrupt Nature is eaſily drawn away by the Example and Allurements

of

of ſinners; This is like going down hill, which is eaſie, conſidering Mens natural bent and inclination: Whereas Self-denyal and mortifying our Luſts and Paſſions, is more difficult, eſpecially at firſt, like going up hill. When therefore you ſee your Children falling into the acquaintance of vicious and fooliſh Perſons, delay not to reſcue them from the ſnare; to break off their Familiarity, that they be not corrupted thereby, and utterly ruined. We ſee how careful People are to keep their Children from thoſe who have the Small Pox, or any other infectious Diſtemper; and yet what a ſtrange madneſs is it for them to truſt them to the Society of thoſe, whoſe Lives and Manners are full of the deadly Poyſon of Sin, which infects and kills the Soul.

Advice to Parents who ſend their Children abroad to Travel.

As this Rule is neceſſary to be followed at all times, ſo eſpecially when Parents ſend their Children into Foreign Countries, when they are fit to Travel; how careful ſhould they be not to truſt them to every body? But to the Conduct of thoſe who not only may be uſeful to advance them in the Know-

Knowledge of the World, to assist them in their Journeyings, to take care about their Lodging and Diet, to wait on them to visit great Men, to see fine Places, curious Fabricks, famous Monuments, and ancient Inscriptions, to learn the Language of the Countrey, and the different Modes and Fashions, the Government and Policy, and such like: But who likewise (through the Blessing of God on their Endeavours,) may preserve them from the Vices of those Countries where they Travel; from those bad Customs to which they have a great inclination: Who may make it their business to season their Minds with deeper and more lively impressions of Virtue; to possess them with a mighty regard for such excellent Examples as they have occasion now and then to see, to fortify them against the many wicked and dangerous Opinions and Practices they meet with; to acquaint them chiefly with the wisest and best Men, by whose Conversation they may be improved in Wisdom and Virtue; that they may return into their own Country with their Minds furnished with useful Notions, with solid Principles, and wise Observations; that they

they may be able, either in a more private way, or in a publick capacity, to do ſomewhat, not unworthy of thoſe who have had ſuch good occaſions for improving themſelves in thoſe things which are excellent. To ſerve this deſign, Parents are to be careful of two things; One is, That their Children travel under the conduct of one who is wiſe and prudent, and is of a ſincere and ſolid Piety: If he be one that is either fooliſh, or prophane and Atheiſtical, his Company muſt needs be very hurtful and dangerous; It may utterly ruine the young perſons who are intruſted to him. What an unaccountable thing is it to think, that men who are careful to have a skilful Groom to look to their Horſes, ſhould be ſo mad, as to venture their Children (who are their chiefeſt Poſſeſſion, and the principal Objects of their care and kindneſs) into the hands of thoſe who have little diſcretion, and leſs piety? The ſecond thing that Parents ought to be careful of, in this matter; is, That their Children do not travel till they are come to ſomewhat of ſtayedneſs, and ſolidity of Judgment; till their underſtanding and diſcretion

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is ſuch, as may give ground to hope that their Travelling ſhall do them no hurt, but good. It is none of the wiſeſt parts in ſome Parents, to ſend their Children too ſoon into Foreign Countries, before their Judgment is prepared, and made fit to make uſeful Reflections and Obſervations on the World; before their minds are poſſeſſed with ſolid Principles of Virtue, and with a deep ſenſe of Religion; ſo as not to be in great danger from the tentations which they are ſure to meet with in moſt places: Before they know any thing at home, it is too ſoon to ſend them abroad: Before they know themſelves a little, it is not adviſable to ſend them into the wide World, to know a vaſt multitude of other things: Hence it too often comes to paſs, that a great many return after their Travels greater Fools than they went; they bring back nothing but a load of the Vices and Vanities of other Countries.

3. *They muſt, as need requires, reprove and chaſten their Children: and how?*

Thirdly, Let not overgreat fondneſs blind your eyes, ſo as not to ſee the faults of your Children; nor cauſe you

you to ſtop your ears againſt juſt complaints. It's true, there are ſome wicked people who love to ſow diſcord, to kindle ſtrife and contention; to divide the neareſt Relations: But all are not ſo very wicked; you cannot but know ſome who love you and your Children ſincerely; and when ſuch perſons tell you of their faults, you ought to do the part of thoſe who are wiſe, as well as kind Parents; that is, you ought to do all you can to reform their faults, and make them better; and withal you ought to be heartily thankful to thoſe who do not flatter you and your Children, to the hurt both of you and them.

In order to their Reformation, try firſt all gentle Methods to make them better: Endeavour to conquer them with the Weapons of Kindneſs and Affection; Endeavour by Inſtructions and Admonitions to make them ſenſible of their Faults; Uſe Promiſes and Encouragements to allure them to do what they ought; When Threatnings are neceſſary, make uſe of them likewiſe; and if they do not ſerve the turn, then try the Rod; but let it be always the laſt remedy, after you have

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in vain attempted their Reformation by milder and gentler Methods: And when you use Severity, do it with due moderation, and with great care; lest you kindle your own passion, and exceed the bounds of wisdom and discretion. If once you give way to this rough, severe, and violent Method of dealing with your Children, there is a threefold disadvantage attends it; First, you discourage your Children, you break their Spirits, you make them unfit for any useful thing; you tempt them to do such things as are hurtful to themselves, and may prove grievous to you. If oppression makes a wise man mad; 'tis no wonder if a Child, or young person, is sadly disordered, and made half mad by cruel and tyrannical usage: Tho' it be a fault in Children to be so; yet Parents ought to be careful not to provoke them over-much to wrath, by a severe unmerciful carriage towards them. Secondly, you kindle your own passions, you disorder your minds, and accustom your selves to a fiery Temper; you become fierce, barbarous, and savage; thereby you turn one of your

The Evil of too great Severity.

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great Temporal Comforts into a grievous Croſs and heavy Burden. Thirdly, you hereby likewiſe teach your Children, thorough your Example, to be of a paſſionate and violent Spirit; and ſo you do them more hurt, than all your Corrections and Inſtructions can do them good: Never think to cure them of their Faults, by your committing as bad your ſelves: You muſt not do evil that good may come of it: The wrath of man worketh not the Righteouſneſs of God.

4. They muſt carefully improve the Time of their Childrens Sickneſs, or of any other afflictions they meet with, towards the making of them wiſer and better.

Fourthly, When it pleaſeth God to viſit them with ſickneſs, or any other adverſity; be ſure to do all that you can, to bear in upon their minds, a ſenſe of thoſe things you are moſt deſirous to have them touched with, and which in time of their health they made but very little account of. Affliction is the time, in which God uſeth to work upon the hearts of people moſt powerfully and effectually; Then he awakeneth them, and convinceth them of their ſad

ſad and dangerous ſtate; He caſts them down, that being made ſenſible of their ſin and danger, he may again raiſe them up, and ſpeak comfortably to them. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderneſs, and ſpeak comfortably to her, Hoſ.* 2. 4. Therefore all they who ſincerely deſire to reclaim their Children, or others, from their bad and fooliſh courſes, ought to take the opportunity of their ſickneſs, their pain and grief, their loſſes and diſappointments, and of any other ſorts of troubles and afflictions wherein they are, that then they may ſuggeſt to them ſuch Counſels and Advices as are proper for their Inſtruction, their Conviction, and Amendment. At other times, there are a great many things which are apt to hinder good Counſel from entring into the mind, or from making any deep impreſſion thereon; pleaſures and vanities are apt to choak the good ſeed: But when they are afflicted and humbled a little by ſome outward preſſure, or bodily diſtemper; they are thereby ſomewhat better diſpoſed to hear friendly Admonitions and Counſels, and to think a little more ſeriouſly of their ways and doings,

doings. *It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his Youth; He ſitteth alone and keepeth ſilence*, &c. *Lam.* 3. 27, 28.

Fifthly, Be earneſt in your Prayers to God daily for them; that he would make them what he requires them to be, his dutiful and obedient Children and Servants; That he would ſeaſon their hearts with his Fear and Love; That he would turn them from Sin and Folly; and incline their hearts to keep his Precepts always, even unto the end; That he would hold up their goings in his paths, that their footſteps may not ſlide; That he would be their God and guide; their Sun and ſhield, and their portion for ever; and that he would give every one of them thoſe things which be beſt and moſt needful for them. You have great encouragement to do this; becauſe you are aſſured that God heareth Prayer; He hath ſaid, *Every one that asketh receiveth.* So that either he will grant your Children what you beg for them, or if they render themſelves unworthy of the mercy and kindneſs of God, by their

5. *They muſt daily pray to God for them.*

their perverſeneſs and ſtubbornneſs; yet you are ſure of one thing, that your Prayers are not loſt; they ſhall return into your boſom: God will plentifully reward your Piety, your Charity, and Zeal, with more Grace here, and Glory hereafter.

Some Motives to excite Parents to do theſe things.

1. *Motive, from the Divine Command.* Now to ſtir you up to perform theſe things; Conſider, firſt, It is the Will of God that you bring up your Children in his Fear, and acquaint them with his holy Laws and Commandments. He who made you, requires you to do this; he who preſerves you and keeps you alive; he who is your King and Lord, who has a Right to your ſervice, to all that you are able to do; who is your Father in Heaven; who daily takes care of you, and loads you with his benefits; who is the God of your Salvation; who hath ſent his Son into the World to die for you: It is even he who ſaith, *Eph.* 6. 4. *And ye Fathers, provoke not your Children to wrath, but*

but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. If you then be the Subjects, the Servants, and the Children of the great God; If you love and fear him, as you ought to do, you will be ſure to make it your buſineſs to train up your Children in true Virtue and Piety; to make them what God requires them to be, *holy, as he who hath called them is holy, in all manner of Converſation*; you will excite them to ſtrive to *enter in at the ſtrait gate*; To *work out their Salvation with fear and trembling*; To *remember their Creator in the days of their youth*; To *ſeek God while he may be found, and to call upon him while he is near*; To *love the Lord with all their heart, and their Neighbours as themſelves.*

2. *Motive, from its being a work worthy of the utmoſt care and pains of Parents.*

Secondly, Is not this a work worthy of all your care and pains, to ſave the Souls of thoſe, who are parts of your ſelves, who derive their Being from you? You are the Inſtruments not only of their Being, but the means of conveying unto them natural defilement and corruption: And therefore you ought with a great deal of Zeal

to endeavour to have their pollutions waſhed off by true unfeigned Repentance, and a hearty turning from Sin unto God; by their putting off the works of darkneſs, and putting on the Armour of light; by their putting on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and walking as he walked. Are you ready to do all that you can to make your Children rich and wealthy, great and honourable in the World? And yet are you at ſo little pains to do that for them, which tends to make them rich in Faith, and Heirs of a glorious Inheritance? You endeavot to acquaint them with thoſe who may be uſeful to them in their worldly Affairs and Concerns; And why do you not ſtrive to acquaint them with God, their greateſt and beſt Friend? Who is ſure to ſtand by them, to take them up, and to take care of them, when all forſake them, and turn their backs upon them? Why do you not with greater earneſtneſs endeavour to procure unto them his Friendſhip and Love, who is infinitely Powerful, and infinitely Good and Kind; and therefore not only can, but will do for them exceeding abundantly above all that either you or they can think or ask? *Thirdly*,

Thirdly, The doing of this is attended with great Rewards, not only in another World, but even in this Life. You cannot but find unſpeakable Joy and Comfort, when you behold your Children walking in the fear of God, going from ſtrength to ſtrength, and from Grace to Grace, that at laſt they may come and appear before the Lord in *Sion*. It will free you from a great many anxious thoughts about them for the time to come, when you know that they have God for their Friend, who will be a Guide and Buckler to them: What a great ſatisfaction will it afford you, to think that they, for whom you make ſo great proviſion, and are at ſo much pains, are good and wiſe, and in all probability will make good uſe of what is given them, or deſigned for them? When you ſee them humble, of a mild and gentle temper, apt to bear uneaſie things meekly and patiently; when you ſee them ſober and temperate, charitable and compaſſionate, juſt and upright, true and faithful, wiſe and prudent, devout and religious, zealous

3 Motive, from the Rewards which attend thoſe who faithfully do theſe things.

for the Honour of God, and ſtudying daily to grow up in all Virtue and Piety; How will this fill you with a Pleaſure that cannot be expreſſed? So true is it that is ſaid by the Wiſe Man, *Prov.* 15. and 20. *A wiſe Son maketh a glad Father.*

4. *Motive, from the ſad Effects which attend the neglect of theſe Duties.*

Fourthly, If you neglect to do theſe things for the Souls of your Children, and leave them to themſelves to do as they liſt, then you may expect that their Sins and Follies, their Pride and Paſſion, their Gluttony and Drunkenneſs, their Curſing and Swearing, their Lying and Deceiving, their Malice and Revenge, their Chambering and Wantonneſs, their Atheiſm and Irreligion, will not only prove Tragical to them, but occaſion great uneaſineſs, vexation and grief of mind to you. *Prov.* 10. 1. *A Fooliſh Son is a heavineſs to his Mother*, and *Ch.* 17. 21. *He that begetteth a Fool, doth it to his ſorrow, and the Father of a Fool hath no joy.*

'Tis true, 'tis not in the Power of Parents to infuſe good Qualities into the Minds of their Children; ſome are ſo very perverſe, that all that can be

be ſaid or done by Parents, is altogether ſlighted, and neglected by them: However ſuch Parents, who have the affliction of ſad and wretched Children, have ſome comfort and ſatisfaction in having done their Duty for them, and in endeavouring to approve themſelves unto God, who will accept of their honeſt and ſincere endeavours; and will crown them with glorious Rewards. But it is otherwiſe, when Children prove bad through the too great indulgence or the negligence and bad Example of Parents. What a deep wound muſt it needs give them, when they begin to conſider that they did not their part to make their Children good, and were ſo far from it, that they corrupted and ruined them by their bad Example, and over great kindneſs and indulgence? Such Parents do often eat the Fruits of their cruel fondneſs, and feel the ſad Effects of their own bad Example, by means of their Prophane and Graceleſs Children. As God doth often *viſit the iniquity of the Parents upon the Children*; ſo when Children are ſuffered to go on in their fooliſh and wicked courſes, through the indiſcreet gentleneſs and kindneſs of Parents,

who, perhaps, are in other reſpects good people; the Lord doth ſometimes puniſh ſuch Parents, and bring Temporal Judgments upon them. *Ely* was a great inſtance of this, 1 *Sam.* 2. and 22. He heard *all that his Sons did unto all Iſrael*; which were things of a very vile nature, whereby, as it's ſaid *Chap.* 3. and 13. *they made themſelves Vile*, that is, hateful to God, and baſe and contemptible to all the People, by their lewd and abominable practices. *Ely* did reprove them, but it was too coldly and gently. *Chap.* 2. 23, 24. *And he ſaid unto them, why do you ſuch things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this People: Nay, my Sons; for it is no good report that I hear; you make the Lord's People to tranſgreſs.* Beſides his reproof, he ought to have reſtrained them, *Ch.* 3. and 13. as being High-Prieſt, a Judge, and Chief Governour amongſt the People: He ought to have put them out of the Prieſthood, as accurſed perſons, and executed the Laws of God againſt them. Which becauſe he did not, therefore God denounced very dreadful judgments againſt him by a Prophet, whom he ſent unto him, *Chap.* 2. 31, 32, 33, 34, 36. and *Chap.* 3. 13,

3. 13, 14. And in *Chap.* 4. we find his two Sons *Hophni* and *Phineas* were ſlain in Battel by the *Philiſtines*, and the Ark of God was taken; upon the news whereof, the Old Man fell from off his Seat backwards, and his neck brake, and he dyed.

We ſee likewiſe in *David*, what was the Effect of his too great indulgence to ſome of his Children; eſpecially *Abſalom* and *Adonijah*, who not only wrought their own deſtruction, but proved great Croſſes to their aged Father.

Advice to Parents.

PART II.

The Duties of Parents as to their Childrens Bodies.

HAving treated of the Duty of Parents towards their Children, as to their Souls, the better part; I ſhall next ſhew what their Duties are, as to the Bodies of their Children.

1. *Duty, it belongs to the Mother to give ſuck to her Children.*

Firſt, It belongs to the Mother to give ſuck to her Children; unleſs ſome bodily imperfection, great weakneſs, or ſickneſs, or her circumſtances in the World, make it impoſſible, or very dangerous and inconvenient both for her and the Children, or for either. For this end it is that God hath given Breaſts unto Women, and cauſed the Milk

Milk to flow into them, that there may be nouriſhment ſuitable to the tender Infants in a readineſs for them. Neither can we ſuppoſe any other body capable of ſhewing equal Care and Love to the Children, with that which it is natural for the Mother to expreſs to the Fruit of her own Womb. Beſides this, it cannot well be imagined, that the Milk of any other Body can be ſo fit for the Child as its own Mothers, if ſhe be but in tolerable Health. Even amongſt the Heathens, they were accounted but half Mothers, who neglected to give Suck to their Children. An ancient Author amongſt the Heathens, ſpeaking on this Subject, ſaith *, How unnatural a thing is this, how imperfect, and only to be a Mother by halves, having brought forth a Child, preſently to throw it away? having nouriſhed in her Womb ſomewhat that ſhe could not ſee, not now to nouriſh it with her Milk, when ſhe ſees it alive, and calling for her aſſiſtance?

* *Aulus Gellius*, lib. 12. cap. 1. *Quod eſt enim hoc contra naturam, imperfectam atque dimidiatum matris genus?*

Peperiſſe, ac ſtatim ab ſeſe abjeciſſe? aluiſſe in utero, ſanguine ſuo, neſcio quid, quod non videret? non alere nunc ſuo lacte quod videat, jam viventem? jam hominem? jam matris officia implorantem?

We ſee likewiſe that Nature hath impreſſed on the moſt Savage and Wild Creatures a readineſs to draw out their Breaſts to their young. *Lam* 4. 3. *Even the Sea Monſters draw out the Breaſt, they give Suck to their young ones.* And ſhall Women degenerate into ſuch unnatural Barbarity towards their young, as is not to be met with amongſt the moſt ſavage Creatures? Shall they, whoſe love and tenderneſs has been ſo noted and admired, prove unkind and cruel to the fruit of their own Womb?

2. *Duty, about Childrens Diet.*

2*ly.* When Children are fit for ſtronger Food, Parents are not to indulge them too much in gratifying the curioſity and daintineſs of their Palate, which not only is apt to make them too ſoft and tender; but likewiſe diſpoſeth them to gluttony and ſenſuality; to make their Belly their God. It is fit to accuſtom them to a plain and ſimple Diet; which is generally more wholſom than that ſort

ſort of Food which is very artifically prepared. The State of all Humane Things is very uncertain; they who have at preſent all manner of things in greateſt plenty and variety, may meet with changes and viciſſitudes: It's therefore a part of the Wiſdom of Parents, to accuſtom their Children (ſo far as their Health and ſtrength can bear it) to eat any ſort of Food; that ſo, if God ſees fit to change their outward condition and circumſtances, they may be the more fit and able to endure ſuch an alteration.

Thirdly, As to their Habit and Apparel: Parents ought to cloathe them decently, but not gorgeouſly: Fineries and Gayeties in Apparel are apt to make people, eſpecially younger perſons, vain and conceited, to value themſelves upon their gay Cloathing. It is fit often to ſuggeſt to them, that their Cloaths and Apparel are but borrowed Feathers; and therefore that it is a great folly to be proud of that which is not their own, but which they owe to the Sheep or Goats, to the Worms or Bowels of the Earth.

3. *Duty, about Childrens Apparel.*

It

It is not fit for Parents, to make too great distinction among their Children, as to their Apparel; because this is apt to cause discontents and jealousies, hatred and envy, contentions and quarrellings amongst them. *Joseph*'s Coat of many Colours, which his old Father *Jacob* gave him, caused his Brothers to hate and envy him, and at last to conspire most wickedly against him, *Gen.* 37. 3, 4. *&c.* The same is to be said as to their Diet, and other things; wherein it is no small part of the Wisdom of Parents, not to shew too much fondness to one above all the rest. This does not hinder, but that Parents may, to very good purpose, give Rewards to their Children for their Acts of Virtue, for their ready and chearful Obedience to their Commands; for their diligence and care in performing what was appointed them, *&c.* Whereby they who do such things are encouraged, and they who do not, but are careless and negligent, are punished, and spurred up to amend their faults. But when such marks of favour are bestowed, 'tis fit to let the rest know, that if they do as well, they also shall have a Reward: By which means they will

will see that Virtue and Goodness are the things which their Parents love and esteem most; and for which they are ready to bestow the marks of their affection.

The Duty of Parents as to the outward Estate of their Children.

A third thing that belongs to the care of Parents, is the outward Estate of their Children.

First, When they are fit for a Trade, they ought to chuse an honest Employment for them: To suffer them to live in Idleness, is to ruin them: If they have not some useful thing or other to take up their thoughts, they are in great hazard of finding somewhat to do which is bad, and hurtful both to themselves and others. The Devil is always at hand to furnish Occasions to idle people, for employing themselves to their own destruction.

1. *Duty, to chuse a fit Trade for them.*

As to the particular kind of Employment, wherein Children are to spend their days, it is to be left to the discretion and prudence of Parents: They

are

are ſo to inſtruct and diſpoſe the minds of their Children, that they may be ready to be determined to any Trade or manner of Life that's honeſt, which their Parents think beſt and meeteſt for them to follow: But yet a great regard is to be had to the particular Genius and Inclination of Children, which ordinarily diſpoſeth them more for one ſort of Employment than another: It will make them more diligent in learning their Trade, when they have a delight in it: Otherwiſe, if they are put forth to a Trade againſt their minds, they are more likely to neglect it, or to break off from it. Seldom do ſuch perſons attain unto great perfection in their Employment, who follow it againſt the grain.

2. *Duty, about diſpoſing of them in Marriage.*

Secondly, When they are fit for Marriage, Parents are ſo to diſpoſe of them, as that in all likelyhood they may be happy in ſuch a ſtate of Life: They are not to conſtrain them to marry againſt their will; for ſuch marriages are ſeldom happy; they end too often in ſomewhat or other very Tragical and Calamitous, to one or t'other party, if not to both. Great

Great care is to be taken, that there be not too great inequality of outward ſtate and condition; for that occaſions often neglect and contempt of the perſon that is inferiour to the other in ſome external advantages: Nor yet too great inequality of years; for that doth likewiſe, ſooner or later, cauſe an abatement and decay, and ſometimes an utter extinction of that Reſpect and Love which is neceſſary to make thoſe who are married happy.

Parents are not, in diſpoſing of their Children in Marriage, to govern themſelves wholly by their reſpect to Riches and Honour; but are to have a regard to Virtue and Goodneſs, ſo far, as to prefer one who is diſcreet and wiſe, of a Virtuous and good diſpoſition, to another that is fooliſh, or indiſcreet, and prophane and Atheiſtical, tho' attended with greater degrees of Wealth and Earthly Honour. What a great Reproach is it to our Religion, to think that ſo many Parents, in diſpoſing of their Children, only conſider how much Wealth they may have, and what Friends and Alliances they may make by marrying into ſuch a Family? or what Profits and Preferments may be

be expected thereby? As for any other thing, they do not much trouble their Heads about it: They know no other happineſs but in the things of this life, and therefore they ſeek nothing elſe for their Children, but to make them great and wealthy; by which means it often comes to paſs that they bring their Children into a moſt miſerable and unhappy ſtate of life, in which they muſt pine away their days in ſorrow and grief, in the Company of fooliſh and wicked wretches, who are often in a fury and rage, who ſpend their time in gaming and drinking, in Curſing and Swearing, in quarrelling and fighting, in whoring and ranting, and ſuch like woful doings; which cannot but prove to thoſe, who have any the leaſt degree of real goodneſs, ſo very uneaſie and afflictive, that Wealth and Riches can make no amends for them. Such unfortunate perſons cannot but often envy the happineſs of thoſe who are in a very poor and low eſtate and condition, but yet live in peace and quietneſs, in love and concord, and in the fear of God; and ſo enjoy real ſatisfaction and contentment, and have a great deal of Comfort to ſweeten

their

their outward Wants and Neceſſities. *Prov.* 15. 16, 17. *Better is little with the fear of the Lord, than great Treaſure, and trouble therewith. Better is a Dinner of Herbs where Love is, than a ſtalled Ox, and hatred therewith.*

Thirdly, Parents are to provide for them, if they can, ſomewhat that may be a foundation for their Comfortable ſubſiſtance in the World; which by the Bleſſing of God on their Callings, may be improved towards their living decently and honeſtly. Parents are not to propoſe to themſelves, the rendring their Children very Great and Rich: But as they themſelves having Food and Rayment, are to be therewith content; ſo, if they can get Neceſſaries for their Children, they ought to reſt ſatisfied, and be thankful. Our life (that is the happineſs of our life) doth not conſiſt in the abundance of the things we poſſeſs, *Luke* 12. 15. Tho' you are thus to provide for your Children; yet you are not, out of too great thoughtfulneſs about the time to come, to reſtrain your ſelves from doing all neceſſary

3. *Duty, about providing ſomewhat that may be the foundation of their comfortable ſubſiſtance in the World.*

ceſſary Offices of Charity to the poor, who do now ſtand in need of your help: Never neglect a preſent Duty for fear of an uncertain inconvenience: You are forbid to *take thought for the Morrow*, *Matth.* 6. 34. But you are required *to do good to all Men*, while you have opportunity, *Gal.* 6. 10. *To caſt your Bread upon the Waters; to give a Portion to ſeven, as alſo unto eight, becauſe you know not what evil there may be in the Earth*, *Eccleſ.* 11. 1, 2. This is the way to lay up Treaſures for your Children; to entail upon them great Bleſſings; to make God their Guardian; to leave them to his merciful and kind Providence, and to his Almighty protection. *Pſ* 37. 25, 26. *I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not ſeen the Righteous forſaken, nor his Seed begging Bread. He is ever merciful and lendeth, and his Seed is Bleſſed.* So that by your Bounty and Charity, you put forth your Money into God's hands, who will not fail to repay it with Uſury. *He that gives to the poor, lendeth to the Lord.* You thereby bring your Wares to a good Market. *The liberal Soul ſhall be made fat*, Prov. 11. 25. *He that gives to the poor ſhall not lack*, Prov. 28. 27. and

and *Deut.* 15. 10. it is written, *Thou ſhalt ſurely give him,* (to wit thy poor Brother) *and thy heart ſhall not be grieved, when thou giveſt unto him; becauſe that for this thing, the Lord thy God ſhall bleſs thee, in all thy Works, and in all that thou putteſt thine hands unto.* And in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews, ch. 6. v.* 10. it is ſaid, *God is not unrighteous to forget your work, and labour of love, which you have ſhewed towards his Name, in that you have miniſtred to the Saints, and do miniſter.* From all which it appears, that Charity and Liberality are the beſt Husbandry.

As you are to beware, leſt your care for your Children, make you neglect neceſſary Duties of Charity; ſo you are to take heed, leſt you uſe any unlawful method to get Wealth to beſtow upon them: This is not a way to make them rich; for ſuch Riches ſeldom proſper: There is a Curſe which attends all unlawful Gain, and like a Canker eats it out, and conſumes it. All Ages and Places afford Examples, which confirm this Obſervation. *Better,* ſaith *Solomon, Prov.* 16. 8. *is a little with Righteouſneſs, than great Revenues without Right.*

Thus

Thus I have ſhewed you what are the principal Duties you owe to the Souls and Bodies of your Children, and what you are to do for them as to their outward Eſtate.

The above mentioned particulars earneſtly recommended to Parents.

From what hath been ſaid you may ſee, what a weighty and difficult charge you have; the ſenſe whereof ſhould excite you to beg of God earneſtly every day, that he would direct and aſſiſt you, to perform the Duties that belong to Chriſtian Parents. That you may the better act your part; 'tis fit for you, when you call your ſelves to an account about your Lives and Converſations, to make enquiry particularly how you perform the Duties of Parents towards your Children, as to their Souls, their Bodies, and Outward Concerns: And if upon ſerious enquiry, you find that you ſincerely endeavour to do whatever you know your ſelves to be bound to do for them; then bleſs and praiſe God, who gives you both to will and to do according to his good pleaſure: Beg his pardon for thoſe imperfections and

and defects that attend all Humane Actions: Reſolve to go on, and not to grow weary in your Duty towards them; that ſo they may be as happy in all reſpects, as is poſſible for you, by the help of God, to make them.

But if upon enquiry, you find that you have been very defective in your duty towards your Children; that you have done very little good for their Souls, and not what you ſhould, and might have done for their Bodies and outward Eſtate; and that perhaps you have done them a great deal of hurt by your Evil Counſel, and Prophane and Wretched Example; that you have led them on in the Broad Way, which leads to the Chambers of Death; that you have robbed God, who beſtowed them on you, of their Service and Obedience; and have made them *the Servants of Sin*; that you have contributed to the making them *Heirs of Wrath, Children of Diſobedience*, who were made by their Baptiſm, *Children of God, and Inheritors of the Kingdom of Heaven*; that you have done what tended to deſtroy eternally thoſe Souls and Bodies, which God intruſted with you, that you might take care of them, and do what

what you could to make them happy. If, I ſay, upon enquiry into your hearts and lives, you find your ſelves guilty of thoſe things, how great reaſon have you to be in bitterneſs and grief of Heart, to weep and lament, to abhor your ſelves in Duſt and Aſhes, to confeſs and acknowledge your ſins with great humility and contrition, to implore the divine mercy and forgiveneſs with all earneſtneſs, for the ſake of his dear Son; to reſolve and purpoſe ſincerely to amend your ways and doings; to beg grace from God, that he would aſſiſt you, that he would compaſs you about with his Salvation; and never leave you nor forſake you. Conſider the particular things wherein you have hurt the Souls of your Children, and failed in your Duty to them, as to their Bodies and Outward Concerns: And the more you find you have done amiſs, reſolve ſo much the more to be zealous to do them good; to double your diligence in promoting the welfare and happineſs both of their Souls and Bodies. Tell them ſo far as is meet, what you now ſee and feel; let them know that you have been out of the way, that you have miſled them, and

and brought both your ſelves and them in danger of being undone, and ruined eternally: Tell them what you reſolve to do, and what you and they ought to do, and muſt do, or elſe that you will certainly periſh. Delay not to do this one moment: fly like a Bird out of the Snare of the Fowler. Your Souls lye at the ſtake, and therefore do what Men uſe to do to ſave their Lives; *Skin for Skin, and all that a Man hath, will he give for his Life.* Men are ready to part with any thing to ſave their lives; They'l part with Houſe and Lands, with Silver and Gold, with their whole Eſtate and Subſtance, to ſave their Bodies alive, which muſt dye at laſt, and, for ought they know, may dye within a very few days or hours. How much more ought you, that you may ſave your own Souls, and the Souls of your Children, to part with your vile and unruly Luſts and Paſſions, your vain fooliſh Habits and Cuſtoms, which are your reproach and diſhonour, which are the worſt things in the World; which can do you no good, if you hold them ſtill, but will certainly do you a great deal of miſchief? They will prove the cauſe of your deſtruction;

they

they will deprive you of all that is good and excellent; they will cut you off from the favour of God, the Love of Christ, and the fellowship of the Blessed Spirit; they will likewise deprive you of the assistance and Ministry of the Holy Angels, and the Comfortable Society of the Saints departed; they will exclude you for ever from the Kingdom of Heaven, the Crown of righteousness, the peace and joy, the love and glory of the future State: All this your sins will deprive you of; and instead thereof, they will expose you to the Wrath of God, to the devouring fire, to everlasting Burnings, to blackness of darkness, to weeping and gnashing of Teeth, to the wretched and cursed company of Devils and damned Souls, to the Worm which never dieth, which will gnaw you, and torment you for ever: And will you chuse all this rather than part with your Lusts, that you may be for ever happy, and have fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore? Will you be so mad, as to prefer Hell and Death, everlasting Misery and Woe, to Heaven and everlasting life, to Blessedness and Glory? Now is the time for you

to

to become either happy or miſerable; if you repent and amend, and act the part of Wiſe and Religious Parents, you may be happy; for God will have mercy upon you. *Iſa.* 55. 7. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous Man his Thoughts: And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* Follow therefore the Example of the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 119. 59, 60. *I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto thy Teſtimonies. I made haſte and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.* But if, inſtead of this, you continue in your ſin and folly, ſetting at naught Gods Counſels, and deſpiſing his Reproofs, putting the Evil Day far from you, promiſing your ſelves peace and ſafety, tho' you walk after your own Hearts Luſts; making a mock at ſin, and laughing at all that is ſacred and ſerious; and by your wicked Example deſtroying the Souls and Bodies of your poor Children; then aſſure your ſelves God will not be mocked; he will at laſt whet his Sword and bend his Bow, and make ready his Arrows againſt his Adverſaries; he will render to you according to your Works; he will in no wiſe

clear the Guilty. Consider the terrible threatning which is mentioned, *Deut.* 29. 19, 20. against the man, who, when he heareth the words of the Curse, does bless himself in his Heart, saying, *I shall have peace, tho' I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst:* [*The Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord and his jealousie shall smoke against that man; and all the Curses that are written in this Book shall lye upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his Name from under Heaven.*]

Concerning the Duty of Parents when God removeth their Children by death.

After all that hath been said, it will not be unfit to add somewhat concerning the Duty of Parents, when God sees fit to remove their Children from them by Death. This falls out so very often to Parents, that it cannot but be seasonable to a great many to suggest to them some plain and easie considerations, which they may sometimes reflect upon, and imprint on their minds; that so they may not be surprised with the death of their Children, nor swallowed up of excessive and immoderate grief.

Parents

Parents ought to consider, when their Children dye, *first*, that it is the Lord who does it: He who is Lord of Life, who gave Life to themselves and to their Children, is also Lord of death, and removes out of the World whom, and when, he sees fit. He is the great Potter; and Man is the Clay, which he hath formed and fashioned into a curious and beautiful shape; and animated with an immortal Soul: When he sees fit to break this brittle Vessel in pieces, and to separate the Soul from it, who dare say unto him, What doest thou? May not he do with his own, what he thinks good? Or must he give an account of his Actions, unto the work of his own hands? He is infinitely great and powerful; and therefore will do according to his own good pleasure: He is infinitely wise, and knows what's best and fittest to be done: He is infinitely good and kind, and therefore will order all things for good: And he is infinitely just and righteous, and therefore can do no wrong. It's fit therefore that Parents, when God removes their Children from them by

1. *They ought to consider that it is the Lord who does it.*

Death, ſubmit chearfully to the will of him, who is infinitely powerful, wiſe, good, and juſt; and that they adore him, and ſay with *Ely*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 18. *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good.*

2. *They ought to conſider that their Children were born mortal.*

Secondly, They ſhould conſider that their Children were born Mortal, frail by Nature, ſubject to a neceſſity of dying, by their very compoſition and frame; and alſo by the Decree of Heaven, *Heb.* 9. 27 *It is appointed for all Men once to dye.* And therefore when God ſees fit to remove them by Death, to make the Houſe of Clay fall down about their Ears, Parents ought not to be ſurpriſed: This is nothing but what falls out daily: Some are going out of the World, and ſome are coming into it: Some are a great while upon the Stage, and ſome but a very ſhort while; ſome no ſooner enter upon it, but preſently they are gone, and are ſeen no more; ſome take a few turns, and then they are withdrawn; ſome tarry longer, and act a great part on the Stage, for a conſiderable time, and

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give hopes of yet greater Actions and Performances; but on a ſudden they are gone likewiſe, as a ſhadow; and all their own deſigns and projects, and the hopes and expectations of others fall to the ground. All this happens every day in the Courſe of things here in the World; and therefore Parents have no reaſon to think it ſtrange when they ſee their Children dye. *The thing that hath been, it is that which ſhall be; and that which is done, is that which ſhall be done; and there is no new thing under the Sun*, Eccleſ. 1. 9.

And as it is with men, ſo it is with all things elſe, which live upon the Earth, or grow out of it: Some live longer and ſome a ſhorter while than others of the ſame kind: Some proſper and thrive, and others decay and periſh. Some things grow up in the Morning, and are withered e're Night: Some things grow apace till they are very near the time of ripeneſs and perfection; and then ſomewhat happeneth, which prevents the perfect growth, and makes the goodly appearance come to nothing: Now, what are Men? *Moſes* in his Prayer (*Pſ.* 90. 5, 6.) tells us, *In the Morning they are like*

graſs, which groweth up; In the Morning it flouriſheth and groweth up: In the Evening it is cut down and withereth. And to the ſame purpoſe the Pſalmiſt *David* ſpeaketh, *Pſal.* 103. 15, 16. *As for Man his days are as graſs, as a flower of the field, ſo he flouriſheth, for the Wind paſſeth over it, and it is gone, and the place thereof ſhall know it no more.* Likewiſe *Eſa.* 40. 6, 7. it is thus written, *The Voice ſaid Cry. And he ſaid What ſhall I cry? All fleſh is graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof is as the flower of the field. The graſs withereth, the flower fadeth, becauſe the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: Surely the people is graſs.* By all which it appears what Man is by Nature, to wit, a very weak and vaniſhing thing, ſoon nipt and brought to nothing; like the tender Graſs and the Flower of the Field, which is more expoſed to the Winds and other inconveniencies, than the Flowers of the Garden, which the Gardiner preſerves and ſecures.

The Conſideration of theſe things will tend mightily to quiet the minds of thoſe who calmly and wiſely reflect upon them, when God removes their Children,

Children, or other Relations from them by Death. Their caſe is not ſingular, it is that which is common and uſual amongſt men; it is according to the courſe of Nature for a mortal thing to die.

But what if the manner of the death of your Children be ſomewhat extraordinary, by ſome ſudden and unuſual Accident, or by ſome ſtrange and odd Diſtemper; are you on this account to allow your ſelves in the exceſſes of Sorrow and Mourning? No, in no ways: You are not therefore to be tranſported into immoderate grief and mourning. Shall you be vexed and diſquieted, becauſe a Worm did eat up your pleaſant Fruit, or becauſe the ſtormy Wind did blow away your lovely Flowers? Are you therefore to be enraged and mad with anger againſt the Worms, or againſt the Winds? What would it mend the matter, if you ſhould give way to your paſſion and anger never ſo much in ſuch a caſe? This would only multiply your loſſes, by making you loſe not only your Fruit and your Flowers, but your ſelves too: Which they all do, who loſe their patience, in which it is that we poſſeſs our Souls.

When therefore your Children are removed from you by Death, in ſome unuſual and extraordinary manner, you ought to look beyond Diſeaſes or Accidents unto the Lord of Life and Death; who by his Providence ordereth not only their death, but the manner of it. If the Sparrows fall not to the ground, that is, die not, without your Father: You may be ſure your Children do not die by chance, or without the particular diſpoſal of their heavenly Father. As to the particular grounds and reaſons for which God does after ſuch a manner ſee fit to put an end to your Childrens days, you are not to be too curious and inquiſitive. The Counſels of God are a great deep: *His ways are in the deep waters; and none by ſearching can find him out unto perfection*, Job 11. 7. Upon ſuch occaſions all ought to remember the words of our Lord, when they told him of the *Galileans*, *whoſe blood Pilate had mingled with their Sacrifices*, Luk. 13. 2, 3, 4, 5. *Suppoſe ye that theſe Galileans were ſinners above all the Galileans, becauſe they ſuffered ſuch things? I tell you, Nay: But except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh. Or thoſe eighteen upon whom*

whom the Tower of Siloe fell, and ſlew them, think ye that they were ſinners above all men that dwelt in Jeruſalem? I tell you, Nay: But except ye repent, ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh.

Thirdly, Conſider from whence, and whither they are gone. They were here in a life of Vexation and Trouble; ſubject to innumerable vanities, temptations, ſnares and dangers: They were compaſſed about with great and terrible Enemies, the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh: They were ſubject to daily neceſſities and wants. If they had lived never ſo long, they would only have ſeen the ſame things in a continual ſucceſſion and revolution: As for Example, heat and cold, fair weather and foul, night and day, Summer and Winter, health and ſickneſs, plenty and poverty, peace and war, proſperity and adverſity, ſucceeding one to another: All things going round. But now they are delivered from all theſe; they are at reſt, they are ſubject to no more neceſſities and wants; oppreſſed with no more troubles and vexations; expoſed to no more ene-

3. *They ſhould conſider from whence, and whither they are gone.*

mies, temptations or dangers; but exalted to a ſtate of perfect peace, joy, love, and glory. They are as well and better than you can deſire: You are not able to comprehend the Happineſs that they are admitted to. Will you then be in continual ſorrow and grief for your Children, when they are exalted to a ſtate of Reſt and Glory; when they are where you would rejoyce to be; when their gracious Father hath freed them from the vain company of the World, and tranſlated them into the bleſſed Society of Angels, and of the Spirits of juſt men made perfect; when he hath put an end to their toil and labour, to their fighting and wreſtling againſt their Enemies, and beſtowed on them a Crown of Glory, and an everlaſting Inheritance; when he hath broken their bonds aſunder, wherein they were held and kept in captivity and ſlavery, and hath put them into a ſtate of perfect and glorious freedom? The conſideration of theſe things ſhould mitigate and aſſwage your ſorrow and grief, and fill you with unſpeakable comfort and gladneſs.

But ſome are apt to ſay, I ſhould rejoyce, if I thought that my Children, who are dead, were in Heaven: But this I do not know. As to this, you are not to trouble your thoughts about it: for God does not ſee fit to acquaint you with ſuch things. *Secret things belong to God; and things revealed to us and to our Children*, Deut. 29. 29. If your Children, while they were alive, minded good things; and if you did your part to inſtruct them, and to make them what God requires them to be, you are not to be any further ſolicitous about their everlaſting ſtate: You are to hope that they are very happy, and you are to comfort your ſelves with theſe thoughts.

But ſome are apt to ſay, I am afraid that my Children are not in a happy ſtate; they did very bad things, and uſed bad Company; and therefore I have cauſe to fear, and to be troubled about them, now that they are dead. As to ſuch Parents, who have had wretched Children, they ought not to ſuffer their minds to be diſordered, and oppreſſed with grief and ſorrow, becauſe their Children, who died, were wicked. If they did their Duty to make them

them better; if they adviſed and admoniſhed them; if they reproved them, and, as was fitting, chaſtened them; if they deſired others to deal with them, to ſee what they could do towards the reclaiming of them; if they prayed to God for them, and gave them a good Example: they are not any further to be troubled and diſquieted concerning them, when God takes them into his own hand; He is wiſe and good, holy and juſt, he does all things well, for excellent and glorious ends; and therefore Parents ought to leave them to his Diſpoſal, who is the Supreme Governour of the World, and Judge of the whole Earth. Whatever he does, whether in Mercy or Juſtice, is always beſt. The Inhabitants of the other World, who are tranſlated into a ſtate of heavenly Glory, are not under the power of ſuch paſſions and partialities, as govern us here below. The glorified Parents of damned Children, are not under any uneaſineſs on that or any other account: The Will of God and his Glory is their all; they know that whatever he does is moſt perfectly juſt and good, and for his honour; and therefore all things afford them great

great pleaſure and delight, true and laſting joy and ſatisfaction of mind. There's nothing able to interrupt the happineſs and joy of thoſe in Glory: They are perfectly and eternally delivered from all ſort of evils, both of ſin and puniſhment: They are placed above the reach of whatever may render them in the leaſt uneaſie.

But there is a third ſort; of thoſe who are troubled, not only becauſe their Children were bad and prophane, but becauſe they were ſo through their example or neglect. As for ſuch, I have already in general ſhewed them what they ought to do. I ſhall only add; That ſince they have been ſo faulty and defective in their Duty towards their deceaſed Children, they ought to be the more careful of thoſe who are yet alive, and to do all that is poſſible to make them what God requires them to be. As to thoſe who have no more Children left them, it would be very fit for them to take into their care one or more Children, upon whom they may beſtow all that pains & care which they ſhould have beſtowed in the right Education of their own; and endeavour, by God's help, to make

them

them truly pious and religious, and Patterns of all ſorts of Virtue to others. This is an office which will be very acceptable to God, and one of the beſt demonſtrations which Parents can make of the ſincerity of their Repentance, for their not having done their Duty to their own Children.

4. *They ſhould conſider that there will be a Reſurrection.*

Fourthly, Conſider, That there will be a Reſurrection of all thoſe that are dead. The mighty Power of God, which made all things out of nothing, will alſo gather together the ſcattered duſt of thoſe who are deceaſed, and will reform and rebuild, as it were, their bodies which are fallen down, and conſumed. He will raiſe them up again in a more excellent, perfect, and glorious manner. Then ſhall you meet with your Children and Friends who died in the Lord, and behold them after another manner, than you ſaw them here in this World. Inſtead of weak and diſeaſed bodies, you ſhall ſee them ſtrong, vigorous, and lively bodies: Inſtead of frail and dying bodies, you ſhall ſee immortal and incorruptible bodies: Inſtead of filthy and vile bodies, you ſhall

ſhall ſee pure and glorious bodies: And you ſhall ſee them ſo as to be with them for ever, ſo as never any more to be ſeparated from them by death, or any other thing; for you and they ſhall die no more: 1 *Cor.* 15. 42, 43, 44. *So alſo is the reſurrection of the dead. It is ſown in corruption, it is raiſed in incorruption; it is ſown in diſhonour, it is raiſed in glory. It is ſown in weakneſs, it is raiſed in power. It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body:* And *verſ.* 15, 53. *This corruptible muſt put on incorruption, and this mortal muſt put on immortality.*

How gladly would poor people part with their deareſt Children, if they could be aſſured of ſeeing them again in an honourable ſtate and condition, exalted to great Dignity and Honour? And will not you, who have the hopes of a glorious Reſurrection, be comforted in the abſence of your Children? when their merciful God and Father takes them away from you unto himſelf; not to do them hurt, but good; to make them happy and bleſſed with himſelf for ever; to beſtow upon them what eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor which hath entred into the

the heart of man to conceive? Consider the words of the Apostle to the *Thessalonians*, 1 *Epist.* 4. 13, 14. *But I would not have you to be ignorant, Brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope: For if we believe that Jesus dyed and rose again, even so them, which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him.*

5. They should consider that their giving way to excessive Grief and Mourning, can do no good, but will certainly do a great deal of hurt.

Fifthly, Your giving way to excessive Grief and Mourning, can do you no good, but will certainly do you a great deal of hurt and mischief in many respects. It cannot bring back your Children that are dead. Though you should break your Hearts into a thousand pieces, by your weeping and mourning, and waste and consume your years in constant heaviness and sorrow; tho' you should never henceforth allow your selves one moment of relaxation of mind; after all you must go to them, they shall not return to you. Now what a folly is it for Men to consume, to disquiet, and to torment themselves, where it is to no purpose at all to do so?

And

And not only do you thereby no good at all to your ſelves, but you do your ſelves a great deal of miſchief and prejudice. You provoke God to anger againſt you, to bring upon you yet heavier and more grievous puniſhments, and to deprive you of other Mercies and Comforts, which you ſtill enjoy.

You do thereby no ſmall hurt to your Bodies; you bring upon your ſelves very dangerous Diſtempers, which will make you unfit for the actions of Life, and the Duties of your Calling. You likewiſe do unſpeakable miſchief to your Souls; you deprive your ſelves of that vigour and chearfulneſs of Spirit, that is needful to make you fit to ſerve God acceptably. You thereby weaken your Memory, and darken and diſorder your Reaſon and Underſtanding, and ſo expoſe your ſelves to all the ſad conſequences of a diſordered and diſtracted Mind.

Your Example does alſo a great deal of hurt to others: Your impatience and immoderate ſorrow and mourning teacheth others to do ſo upon the like occaſion. Hereby you bring no ſmall reproach upon our holy Religi-

on,

on, as if it were not ſufficient to ſupport and fortifie us againſt our croſſes and afflictions, and to comfort us amidſt the uneaſie things which God ſees fit to exerciſe us with in this World.

What an excellent Example is *David* unto you in this matter? When God ſtruck his Child, ſo that it was very ſick, he faſted and prayed; but when the Child died, he *aroſe from the earth, and waſhed and anointed himſelf, and changed his apparel, and came unto the Houſe of the Lord, and worſhipped: Then he came to his own houſe; and when he required, they ſet bread before him, and he did eat. Then ſaid his ſervants unto him, What thing is this that thou haſt done? Thou didſt faſt and weep for the Child, while it was alive; but when the Child was dead, thou didſt riſe and eat bread. And he ſaid, While the Child was yet alive, I faſted and wept; for I ſaid, Who can tell, whether God will be gracious unto me, that the Child may live? But now he is dead, Wherefore ſhould I faſt? Can I bring him again? I ſhall go to him, but he ſhall not return to me*, 2 Sam. 12. 15, 16, &c. Thus ought all Parents to do, who fear

fear God. When the Lord layeth his hand upon your Children, you ought to pray to God for them, and to uſe all lawful means for their recovery: But when he ſees fit to take them away by death, you ought patiently to ſubmit to his Will, and to ſay with *Job: The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; bleſſed be the name of the Lord*, Job 1. 21. This is your wiſeſt courſe: It is the way to make your ſelves happy, and to enjoy comfort and ſatisfaction of mind under your croſſes. This is the likelieſt and readieſt way to obtain new Mercies and Favours from the Lord, inſtead of thoſe you are deprived of: Thus you ſee the Lord dealt with *Job: Jam.* 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have ſeen the end of the Lord: That the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.* And *Job* 42. 12, 13. *The Lord bleſſed the latter end of Job, more than his beginning.* And *verſ.* 16, 17. *After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and ſaw his ſons, and his ſons ſons, even four generations. So Job dyed, being old and full of days.*

But if God ſee it more fit to withhold from you the bleſſings of the Womb,

Womb, and to beſtow no more Children upon you; he can and will make up this want with much greater and better Bleſſings. What you want in Temporals, you ſhall have in Spirituals. As *Elkanah* ſaid to *Hannah*, 1 *Sam.* 1. 8. *He will be better to you than ten Sons. He will give you a Name better than of Sons and Daughters, even an everlaſting Name, that ſhall not be cut off.* Iſa. 56. 5.

SOME

SOME FORMS OF PRAYER WHICH

Parents may teach their Children according to their Age.

A Morning Prayer to be taught Children, when they begin to ſpeak.

O *Lord, I praiſe thee for all thy Mercies, and for thy Care of me this Night. Watch over me this day. Forgive me all my ſins, and make me thy Child for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake.*

This Prayer may be uſed likewiſe at Night,

Night, only changing that petition [*watch over me this Day*] into [*watch over me this Night.*]

When Children come to be four or five years old, the following Prayer may be uſed.

*O Lord my God, what ſhall I render unto thee for all thy Mercies. I bleſs thee for giving me Life, and all things needful to keep me alive. But above all, I bleſs thee for ſending Chriſt to dye for me, that he might waſh me with his Blood, and make me fit for the Kingdom of Heaven. For his ſake have mercy upon me, and forgive me all my ſinful thoughts, words, and deeds. Give me Grace to ſerve thee as I ought to do; that I may not do, nor ſay a naughty thing, leſt thou be angry with me, and caſt me into Hell fire. Lord bleſs and preſerve my Father and Mother * and all my Friends and Relations.*

* If there be Brothers and Siſters let them pray for them likewiſe.

I praiſe thee, O God, for preſerving of me this Night, watch over me this day; ſave me from every evil thing. Good Lord hear me, and grant me whatſoever thou knoweſt to be beſt for me, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake,

ſake, in whoſe holy name and words, I pray, Our Father, *&c.*

This Prayer may be likewiſe uſed at Night, by changing only two words, and ſaying, inſtead of [*preſerving me this night*] [*preſerving me this day*;] and inſtead of [*watch over me this day*] [*watch over me this night.*]

A Morning Prayer for Children, when they come to twelve or fourteen years of Age; ſooner or later, according to the ripeneſs of their underſtanding.

LORD teach and aſſiſt me to worſhip thee as I ought to do, Lift up my heart unto thee.

What ſhall I render unto thee, O moſt gracious God, and moſt merciful Father, for all thy mercies to me, and to all the World? I bleſs thee for making me a reaſonable Creature, and for affording me all things which be needful to ſupport my Life; I bleſs thee for my health, liberty, and ſafety; for my Food and Rayment; for the uſe of my Reaſon and Underſtanding,

ing, and of my Senſes; for thy corrections and deliverances; and for all the advantages I have had by good Examples, and good Inſtructions: But chiefly, I praiſe and bleſs thee for the redemption of Mankind by the Lord Jeſus Chriſt: That I was born within thy Church, where I was early given to thee in Baptiſm; that I have had the benefit of Chriſtian Education; that thou haſt afforded me the means of Grace, and called me to the hope of Glory.

*But notwithſtanding thy goodneſs and love, I have gone aſtray from thee; I have not cared ſo much as I ought to have done, to know thee, and to do thy Will, but have done my own will in many things; and followed my own fooliſh and ſinful inclinations: I have broken many of thy moſt Holy and Juſt Laws, in thought, word, and deed**, *whereby I have deſerved thy Wrath and Curſe.*

* Here they may make a particular Confeſſion of their Sins.

Father of Mercies have mercy upon me, & forgive me all my ſins for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake, who dyed for ſinners. Give me a true and hearty Repentance for all mine Iniquities; that I may not wilfully break thy

Law;

Laws any more. Lord never leave me, nor forſake me. Hold up my goings in thy Paths, that my footſteps may not ſlide. Grant that henceforth I may love thee with all my heart, and may be afraid to ſin againſt thee: Work in me a true Faith, and a lively hope; make me humble, meek, and patient, ſober and temperate in all things, Charitable and compaſſionate towards all that are in diſtreſs, true and faithful in my words, and ſincere and upright in my Actions, well content and thankful in every condition of Life, and zealous for thy Glory. Grant that I may daily grow in Grace and ſpiritual Knowledge. Create in me a clean Heart, and renew a right Spirit within me, and cauſe me to walk in thy ways.

O Lord ſend thy Goſpel through the World: pour out plentifully the Bleſſings of thy holy Spirit on all thy People: Bleſs and preſerve our King and Queen. Guide our Judges and Magiſtrates: Sanctifie and aſſiſt the Miniſters of the Goſpel. Be with all my Friends and Relations, particularly bleſs and preſerve my Father and Mother. Reward them for their care and kindneſs towards me: Make me a loving

* If there be any Brothers or Sisters, he may pray for them, and for Grandfather and Grandmother, if they be alive.

and dutiful Child unto them. * *Comfort all that are in trouble, and ſanctifie their afflictions to them.*

I thank thee, O Lord, for thy care of me this Night: Watch over over me this day. Bleſs and direct me in all I do or ſay. Keep me mindful that I am always in thy ſight, that I may be in thy fear all the day long. Cauſe me to remember that I muſt ſhortly dye and come to judgment; that I may not miſpend my precious time, but employ it in a conſtant and chearful Obedience to thy holy and righteous Laws; that when this vain and ſhort life is at an end, I may be made partaker of everlaſting Life, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; in whoſe Holy Name and words I pray, Our Father, &c.

This Prayer may ſerve likewiſe at Night, until you come to the laſt part, which begins with theſe words, [*I thank thee, O Lord, for thy care of me this Night*, &c.] inſtead thereof, you may ſay as follows, [*I thank thee, O Lord, for thy care of me this Day;*

day; watch over me this Night, and grant me quiet repoſe; ſave me from every Evil thing, for the ſake of thy dear Son Jeſus Chriſt, in whoſe Holy Name and words, I conclude my imperfect Prayers, ſaying, Our Father, &c.]

ADVICE

TO

CHILDREN.

BY

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ADVICE TO CHILDREN.

THERE is ſcarce any thing wherein all Nations, and Men of all Religions, do more agree, than in the Common Duties of Children to their Parents: Neither is there any thing that tends more to the comfort and happineſs, the beauty and ſtrength of Society, than for Children to perform all thoſe Duties which they owe to their Parents. And yet how ſad is it to think, that a great many Children, who have not only all the advantages which natural Religion affords, but likewiſe the aſſiſtance of Divine Revelation, do nevertheleſs

carry themſelves in that manner towards their Parents, as if they either underſtood nothing of their Duty, or were moſt prodigiouſly perverſe, and reſolved to rebel againſt the Light, to trample upon all the Principles both of Natural and Revealed Religion.

The Deſign of this ſhort Treatiſe is to ſhew what the Duties of Children are towards their Parents, and to ſuggeſt ſome Conſiderations to excite them to do their Duty.

1. *Duty of Children, to honour their Parents: and how they are to honour them.*

Firſt, Children are bound to honour their Parents; which imports, *Firſt*, That they ſhould entertain reſpectful and reverend thoughts of them, as being under God the Authors of their Life and Being; they muſt not think ſlightingly, and undervaluingly of their Parents, whatever be their weakneſſes and imperfections: They ought to hate and abhor their Vices, every thing in them that is evil, diſhonourable to God, and contrary to his Laws and Commandments; but ſtill they ought to love and

and honour their perſons: And if at any time diſreſpectful and irreverend thoughts ariſe in their minds, they ought to check them, to accuſe and be angry with themſelves for them; and to call to mind what God hath commanded them to do, when he ſaith, [*Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.*]

Secondly, This imports that they ought to expreſs their inward Reverence and Eſteem by all the outward marks and demonſtrations thereof, in their words and deeds, their looks and geſtures; theſe things are the Picture of the Mind, they ordinarily repreſent the temper and diſpoſition thereof; ſo that if there be any thing of real eſteem and regard towards any body in the heart, it will diſcover it ſelf by ſome of thoſe outward expreſſions. We ſee how *Solomon* carried himſelf towards his Mother, 1 *Kings* 2. 19. *Bathſheba went unto King Solomon to ſpeak unto him for Adonijah: And the King roſe up to meet her, and bowed himſelf unto her, and ſate down on his Throne, and cauſed a ſeat to be ſet for the King's Mother, and ſhe ſate on his right hand.*

Children are more apt to carry themſelves irreverently and ſlightingly towards their Mother, which is the reaſon, as ſome think, that ſhe is ſet down firſt. Lev. 19 3. *Ye ſhall fear every man his mother, and his father.*

Thirdly, This imports that they ought to cover the infirmities and weakneſſes, the imperfections and indiſcretions of their Parents; to do as *Shem* and *Japhet* did, *Gen.* 9 23. when *Noah* their Father was drunken, and was uncovered within his Tent. *They took a garment, and laid it upon both their ſhoulders, and went backwards, and covered the nakedneſs of their father, and their faces were backward, and they ſaw not their fathers nakedneſs.* Children are not to publiſh the faults and follies of their Parents; but ought to conceal them, all that they can. However, there are two things very conſiſtent with this Duty: Firſt, Children may and ought to do all that they can, by their private, modeſt, and humble Advice, to reclaim their Parents from their ſinful practices. Secondly, If they find it not ſo fit for them immediately to adviſe their Parents; or if what they ſay hath not the deſigned effect, then they

they may recommend this charitable office to the care of ſome other body, who is a wiſe and kind, a pious and ſerious Friend, who may have ſome more influence than themſelves towards the reclaiming their Parents. This is the greateſt expreſſion of true kindneſs, honour, and reſpect to them, when their Children ſincerely endeavour, in the diſcreeteſt manner, to be the happy inſtruments of their Converſion and Reformation; of turning them from Satan unto God: This is to be, in ſome ſort, the Fathers in Chriſt, to thoſe who are their Parents by Nature. O how happy are the Parents of ſuch worthy Children! How may they rejoyce and bleſs God, who hath beſtowed on them ſo great a Bleſſing?

Againſt thoſe who diſhonour their Parents.

If Children are thus obliged to honour their Parents; what ſhall be ſaid of thoſe who diſhonour, deſpiſe, and ſlight them, all that ever they can; who undervalue them in their thoughts; who ſpeak of them with great contempt and diſdain; who ſpeak to them with great inſolence; who mock and ſcorn them; who laugh at them, and make mouths

at

at them, and point at them with the finger; who reproach and revile them; who break indecent jeſts upon them; who make them the objects of their ſport and paſtime; who take pleaſure in publiſhing their weakneſſes and indiſcretions, that others alſo may laugh at them, and deſpiſe them? How dreadful and terrible are the Curſes and Judgments, which God hath in ſtore againſt ſuch wretched Children? Prov. 30. 17. *The eye that mocketh at his father, and deſpiſeth to obey his mother; the Ravens of the vallies ſhall pick it out, and the young Eagles ſhall eat it.* That is, he who is a mocker and ſcorner of his Parents, who deſpiſes and ſlights them, ſhall die a ſhameful death, and remain unburied, and ſhall be expoſed to the birds and beaſts of prey, to be eaten of them. It does not follow from hence, that all perverſe wretched Children come to ſuch a ſhameful and untimely end: Only it ſhews what oftimes happeneth, and is very uſual, to wit, that ſuch mockers and deſpiſers of Parents are puniſhed remarkably by the Juſtice of God in this World, and are made Examples to all others, who will open their eyes to conſider the hand

hand of God againſt ſuch ungodly Children.

As for Inſtances of the Divine Juſtice againſt Mockers of Parents, all Ages and Countries are full of them. *Cham* was made an Example of this, *Gen.* 9. 22, 24, 25. *And Cham the father of Canaan ſaw the nakedneſs of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Noah awoke from his wine, and knew what his younger ſon had done unto him. And he ſaid, Curſed be Canaan; a ſervant of ſervants ſhall he be unto his brethren.* In which words, tho' *Canaan* the Son of *Cham* is only mentioned, yet *Cham* is not exempted from the Curſe; his puniſhment is hereby made ſo much the greater, becauſe he is not only pronounced accurſed in his own perſon (which is neceſſarily to be ſuppoſed, he having committed the ſin which cauſed the Curſe) but alſo in his Poſterity, which could not but increaſe mightily his grief, and make his puniſhment lye more heavy upon him.

2. *Duty*,

2. *Duty, to obey their Parents.*

Secondly, Children are to obey their Parents, to do what they bid them. See this in the Example of *Joseph*, when *Jacob* sent him to his Brethren, *Gen.* 37. 13, 14. *And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them: And he said to him, Here am I. And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, see whether it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks, and bring me word again: so he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.* The Commands of Parents are either about the same things which God hath commanded, or they are about things indifferent, or about things unlawful. If they are about the same things which God hath commanded, they are so much the more to be obeyed; as being the will and pleasure both of their Father in Heaven, and of their earthly Parents. In this case the obligation to obedience is double. Secondly, If their Parents Commands are about things indifferent, that is, which are neither commanded,

manded, nor forbidden by God, Children are likewiſe to obey them: God hath made it their Duty ſo to do, *Col.* 3. 20. *Children obey your Parents in all things; for this is well pleaſing unto the Lord.* This obedience is very acceptable to him; he takes great pleaſure and delight in it, to ſee thoſe obeyed and ſubmitted to, whom he hath appointed to be, as it were, in his own ſtead; whom he hath cloathed with ſome beams of Divine Power; whom, with relation to their Children, he hath made, in ſome ſenſe, ſacred perſons; whoſe Will ought to be a Law unto them, tho' only in the Lord. For, Thirdly, if the thing commanded be plainly unlawful, they are to refuſe complacence therewith; becauſe they are bound to obey God rather than man, rather than Father or Mother; rather than all the World: Their obligations to God are much greater than to their Parents; he is the Maker both of them, and of their Parents; they live by his Bounty, the Earth they tread on is his; the Air they breathe in, the Heavens that cover them, the food they eat, the water they drink, the garments that cloath them, and all other

other things which they enjoy for their benefit and comfort in the World, are the Lord's: He is their great Master, who appoints them their business in the World, and assures them of a reward; he also will reckon with them, and either reward, or punish them according to their works; and therefore his Commands are to be preferred to those of all others.

But even in this case, Children are to express, in their very denial and refusal of obedience, all that Honour and Respect to their Parents, that's possible; that they may see it is not stubbornness, but the fear of God, which makes them disobey. By this means Parents may perhaps be convinced, and made sensible of their sin, and prevailed with to shun those evil things, which they see their very Children do so much hate and abhor, and wherein they refuse to obey.

Against stubborn and disobedient Children.

If Children are thus bound by the Laws of Heaven, to obey their Parents; what shall be said of those, who make no account of their Parents Commands, but set at naught all their Admonitions and Counsels;

ſels; who will not follow their Directions, and be governed by them for their own good; but do follow their own humor & fancy, and the examples and cuſtoms of others like themſelves? What a ſad mark is this of approaching ruine, and of heavy Judgments, which hang over the heads of ſuch ungodly Children, as you may ſee in the Sons of *Ely*, 1 *Sam.* 2. 25. of whom it is ſaid, that *they hearkened not unto the voice of their Father, becauſe the Lord would ſlay them.*

By the Law of *Moſes*, the ſtubborn Son was to be put to death, *Deut.* 21. 18, 19, 20, 21. *If a man have a ſtubborn and rebellious ſon, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that when they have chaſtened him, will not hearken unto them: Then ſhall his father and mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and unto the gate of his place: And they ſhall ſay unto the Elders of his City, This our ſon is ſtubborn and rebellious, he will not obey our voice: He is a glutton and a drunkard. And all the men of his City ſhall ſtone him with ſtones, that he die: ſo ſhalt thou put evil away from among you, and all Iſrael ſhall hear and fear.*

In

In ancient times, in moſt Countries, Parents had an abſolute power over their Children, to puniſh them as they thought good, for their diſobedience and other faults: And when amongſt the *Romans* they leſſened this power, yet they did it at firſt only in part; The Father was enjoyned to preſent his diſobedient Child to the Judge, that he might be puniſhed; and the Judge was to pronounce ſuch a Sentence as the Father thought fit. This came ſomewhat near the Law of *Moſes*. By this it appears, what the ſenſe of Mankind was concerning the exceeding greatneſs of the crime of ſtubbornneſs and diſobedience in Children to Parents.

3. *Duty of Children, to be determined by their Parents as to their Calling.*

Thirdly, They are to be determined by them, as to their Calling and Employment, if it be an honeſt and lawful one. Their Parents are to be ſuppoſed ordinarily more wiſe and prudent to chuſe for them, than they are to chuſe a Trade for themſelves: They have more experience, and know the World

World better than their Children do; and no doubt, they have kindneſs enough for them to wiſh them well, and to deſign their advantage, and not to preſs them to any Trade or way of Life, which they believe is inconvenient, and like to be hurtful to them: But if Parents ſhould be miſtaken, as to the fitneſs of the Employment, to which they deſign their Children; and ſuppoſing the Children to be ſenſible of the great inconveniencies thereof, which the Parents, through prejudices and partialities, do not ſee; in this caſe Children may, with all due modeſty, meekneſs, and humility, repreſent to their Parents what their thoughts are, and tell them what objections they have againſt ſuch a Calling; that their Parents may be prevailed upon, by their Reaſons, to alter their reſolutions: or if they be not ſo fit themſelves to diſcourſe their Parents upon ſuch a ſubject, they may do it by ſome wiſe and diſcreet Friends. And if after all, Parents be wilful in their intention and deſign; Children are not upon the account of uncertain, or probable inconveniencies, to oppoſe themſelves to the Will of their Parents;

they

they ought to ſubmit themſelves to their Judgment, if the Trade, or manner of Life, to which they deſign them, be not diſhoneſt and unlawful; for then there is no farther queſtion to be made; the caſe is clear: The Will of God is always to be preferred to the Will of Man. *He that loveth father or mother more than me*, ſaith Chriſt, *is not worthy of me*, Matth. 10. 37. But if there be nothing of diſhoneſty or unlawfulneſs in ſuch an Employment, they are to enter upon it with all the chearfulneſs that's poſſible; leaving all events unto God. It will afford great peace and comfort to their minds, whatever afterwards falls out, when they conſider, that they did what was their Duty to do; they ſubmitted their own opinion to the Judgment of their Parents, whom God hath commanded them to obey. Whatever may be their temporal loſs, they are ſure of ſpiritual gain. God will plentifully reward their humble obedience, and ready compliance with the Will of their earthly Parents.

Againſt Children who neglect this Duty.

From what hath been ſaid on this Head, we may ſee how

how much they are to be blamed, who are ſo far from being determined by their Parents, in the way and manner of their living in the World, that they either wholly give up themſelves to idleneſs, and waſte their time in vain and fooliſh Company, or they chuſe ſome way of living, that is either diſhoneſt, or very inconvenient for them in many regards; or if they comply with their Parents, ſo far as to enter upon ſome honeſt way of living, yet they do not keep at it, but leave it, and become Prodigals; they ſpend their ſubſtance in riotous living; they waſte and conſume what their Parents beſtow upon them, in drinking, gaming, and whoring, and ſuch like extravagancies, whereby they prove Robbers of their Parents; of whom, ſee what the Wiſe Man ſaith, *Prov.* 28. 24. *Who ſo robbeth his Father, and his Mother, and ſaith, It is no Tranſgreſſion, the ſame is a Companion of a Deſtroyer.* That is, he is to be look'd on as one of thoſe who rob and murder on the High-way; as a man deſperately wicked, who is diſpoſed to act any ſort of Villany, and Impiety, who will ſtick at nothing in purſuit of his mad and wretched

wretched designs, that may gratifie his Lusts and Passions.

4. *Duty, not to suffer themselves to be bestowed in Marriage against their Parents will.*

Fourthly, As to their Marriage, they are not to suffer themselves to be bestowed, without their Parents consent. Thus *Samson*, Judg. 14. 1, 2. *And* Samson *went down to* Timnath, *and saw a Woman in* Timnath, *and he came up and told his Father, and his Mother, and said, I have seen a Woman in* Timnath *of the Daughters of the Philistins, now therefore get her for me to Wife.* How great reason is there for this? that they who are under God, the causes of their life and being in the World, whose goods and possession Children are, should be acknowledged and advised with by them, and depended on in the settling of themselves in the World, in such a state of Life, which will prove either the foundation of great happiness or of great misery. To give themselves away, without their Parents Consent, is a kind of theft; it is to invade the right of others; to rob them of that which God

God hath given them. We ſee how great the Power of Parents was, by the Law of *Moſes*, *Numb.* 30. 3, 4, 5. To diſanul the raſh Vows of their Children before Marriage. *If a Woman alſo vow a Vow unto the Lord, and bind her ſelf by a Bond, being in her Father's Houſe, in her youth, and her Father hear her Vow and her Bond, wherewith ſhe hath bound her Soul, and her Father ſhall hold his peace at her: Then all her Vows ſhall ſtand, and every Bond wherewith ſhe hath bound her Soul, ſhall ſtand: But if her Father diſallow her in the day that he heareth; not any of her Vows, or of her Bonds, wherewith ſhe hath bound her Soul, ſhall ſtand: And the Lord ſhall forgive her, becauſe her Father diſallowed her.* Now if it be thus in a Father's power to diſanul his Daughters raſh Vow which ſhe made to God, how much more may we reckon it in his Power, to diſanul her raſh and indiſcreet promiſe made to Man, of beſtowing her ſelf without her Parents allowance? Can there be any thing more unjuſt, more unkind, more unthankful, and more unnatural, than for Children, who have been brought up, nouriſhed, and cheriſhed by their Parents, for whom

whom all their care and pains have been bestowed, to dispose of themselves in the most important affair of their lives, without their knowledge, or against their Will? What a grief and trouble of heart must this needs be to their poor Parents? As we see it was to *Isaac* and *Rebekah*, *Gen.* 26. 34, 35. *And* Esau *was forty years old, when he took to Wife* Judith, *the daughter of* Beeri *the* Hittite, *and* Bashemath, *the Daughter of* Elon *the* Hittite, *which were a grief of mind to* Isaac, *and to* Rebekah. As to such undutiful Children, who do thus bestow themselves against their Parents will and consent, it is very remarkable, that they seldom live happily and comfortably; they bring upon themselves very often a great deal of sorrow and trouble, lasting misery and woe: *They live to eat the fruit of their foolish doings*; and wish, when it is to little purpose, that they had never done so mad and wicked a thing.

5. *Duty, to submit to their Parents Reproofs and Chastenings.*

Fifthly, They are meekly and patiently to submit to their Reproofs, to their

their Chaſtenings and Corrections. It is a Power that God hath given Parents over their Children, to correct and chaſten them for their Faults: This is neceſſary for Childrens good; and therefore, when Parents do correct them, they ought not to be angry with them, or grumble at their ſeverity which they uſe for reforming of them; much leſs are they to reſiſt and rebel againſt them. *Heb.* 12. 9. *We have had Fathers of our fleſh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence.* Yea, tho' Parents ſometimes exceed the bounds of prudence and diſcretion in chaſtiſing their Children, tho' they indulge a little to their own Paſſion; yet Children are bound patiently to bear and ſuffer their Corrections: They are not to fly out into indecent and irreverent words and actions, but with all the ſubmiſſion and reſpect that's poſſible, ought to endeavour to mitigate the wrath and paſſion of their angry Parents; and afterwards they are to ſtudy all that ever they can, to prevent their anger and diſpleaſure, by a moſt humble, reverend, and dutiful carriage.

Against Rebellious Children.

How much may this serve to reprove those, who are so far from taking in good part their Parents correcting and chastening of them, that they refuse to submit thereto? They resist them, and rebel against them. Can there be any thing more unnatural and monstrous, than to see those who owe their being to their Parents; who have been brought up by them; who have met with so many testimonies of a tender care, and of great kindness; to rise up against them? to fly into the faces of those who are the Authors of their being? to lift up their hand against them? This is a sin of so crying a nature, that he who was guilty thereof, was to be put to death by the Law of *Moses*, Exod. 21. 15. *He that smiteth his Father or his Mother, shall be surely put to death.* How greatly does it aggravate this sin, when Children have met with no severe, nor unmerciful dealing from their Parents? But have been treated by them, with all that gentleness and kindness that was possible. And yet for such Children to rise up against their Parents, is a Crime of so black a nature,

ture, that it is no wonder if the hand of God appear againſt them for it, in a very ſignal manner; as it did in the caſe of *Abſalom*, for whom his Father *David* had ſo great a fondneſs: This unthankful and unnatural Son roſe up againſt him, and endeavoured by force and violence to pull him from the Throne, and to uſurp the Royal Dignity. See how the hand of God appeared againſt him. 2 *Sam.* 18. 9. *And* Abſalom *met the Servants of* David; *and* Abſalom *rode upon a Mule, and the Mule went under the thick Boughs of a great Oak, and his Head caught hold of the Oak, and he was taken up between the Heaven and the Earth, and the Mule that was under him went away.* And, ver. 14. it is ſaid that Joab *took three darts in his hand, and thruſt them through the heart of* Abſalom, *while he was yet alive in the midſt of the Oak.* And ver. 15. *Ten young Men that bare* Joab's *Armour, compaſſed about, and ſmote* Abſalom, *and ſlew him.* And ver. 17. *They took* Abſalom *and caſt him into a great Pit in the Wood, and laid a very great heap of ſtones upon him.* This was done as a laſting Monument of *Abſalom*'s ſin and ſhame, and of God's righteous Judgment upon him.

6. *Duty, to love their Parents, and how they are to expreſs their Love.*

Sixthly, Children ought to love their Parents; and to expreſs it by all thoſe Offices, which are in their Power to do for them; by ſerving them readily; by doing every thing that may make them well pleaſed; by ſympathizing with them in all their troubles; by aſſiſting them, and doing all they can, to make their Lives joyful and comfortable; by ſhunning every thing that may grieve them, or make them uneaſie: They ought to refuſe no labour, nor pains to do them ſervice, eſpecially when they are ſick and weak, oppreſſed with the Burden of Old Age, or poor and indigent, under any ſort of neceſſity whatſoever; then ought Children to be very ready to help them, to comfort and to encourage them, to do all that they can to make their lives eaſie to them, and to lighten their Burdens. This is called, 1 *Tim.* 1. 4. *A ſhewing Piety at home.* It is an act of Religion and Worſhip, which God is well pleaſed with. We ſee how *Joſeph* nouriſhed his Father and his Brethren,

Brethren, and all his Fathers houſe-hold with Bread, *Gen.* 47. 12. It was an old Roman Law. *Let Children relieve their Parents, or be put in Priſon.*

How many Examples have there been amongſt the Heathens of Eminent Piety towards Parents? Such was that Act of her, who when her Old Father was condemned to be put to death in Priſon, viſited him often, and gave him ſuck, and ſo preſerved him alive, who otherwiſe muſt have dyed of Famine. *Valer. Max.* l. 5. cap. 4.

The like inſtance we meet with in the ſame Author, of a worthy Roman Daughter, who did in the ſame manner preſerve her Mother in Priſon, being condemned to dye. When the Keeper of the Priſon, to whom the charge of putting her to death was committed, found after ſome time, that her Daughter kept her alive by giving her ſuck, he was ſo affected with the greatneſs of the Daughters Compaſſion and tenderneſs to her Mother, that he made it known to thoſe in Power, who were likewiſe ſo mightily touched with ſuch an unuſual in- *Valer. Max. ibid.*

ſtance of tender Affection; that they pardoned the Mother, as the greateſt Reward they could beſtow on the Daughter for her marvellous Affection.

What can there be more juſt and reaſonable, than for Children thus to endeavour to requite their Parents, for their great care and kindneſs towards them, when they were not able to help themſelves? The time was, when their Parents were as Eyes and Hands and Feet to them; they did every thing for them, their Children not being capable to do any thing for themſelves: How ready therefore ſhould they be to ſerve their Parents, to aſſiſt them by all good Offices, when their condition requires it?

This is a Duty to which Children are ſo ſtrictly obliged (to wit the aſſiſting and relieving of their Parents) that no pretence is ſufficient to abſolve them from the Obligation thereof. The *Phariſees* thought they had found out an Exception from this Rule, which was this; that if Children gave away their Wealth to pious and Charitable uſes, they were freed from the Obligation of relieving their Parents: They taught them

them in this case, to tell their Parents, *It is Corban, that is to say, a Gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me.* Mar. 7. 11. And by saying this, they made people believe that they were sufficiently freed from all Obligations to take care of, and provide for their Parents. But our Saviour reproves them severely, telling them, that this was no other than the *making void the Commandments of God by their Traditions.*

Against unkind and unnatural Children.

We may see from this, what Judgment to make of such unkind, undutiful, and unnatural Children, who do wholly neglect their Parents, especially in their old age, and in their poor and low Estate; who shew them no more pity, and express no more love nor tenderness towards them, than if they were not their Parents; who grudge them the least supply; and take all the wicked courses that they can, to starve them to death, that they may be rid of them; who wish and long for, and rejoyce in the death of their poor Parents. O what a horrid Barbarity and Inhumanity is this! Shall not many Pagans rise up in Judgment against such Children, and

Condemn them? How little do they deſerve the Name of Chriſtian Children? Their true Name is Unchriſtian, and unnatural Children. As *Solomon* bid the Sluggard *go to the Ant*, ſo may we bid ſuch hard-hearted and unmerciful Children go to the Stork, of whom it is told, that when the old Dams cannot feed themſelves, their little ones feed and nouriſh them; when their Feathers fall from them, they cover them with their Feathers; and when they are not able to fly, they couple themſelves together, to carry them upon their Backs. Let uncompaſſionate Children go to this compaſſionate Creature, and conſider her ways and be wiſe; Let them learn from her, to be more kind and affectionate, and tender-hearted towards their Parents, and not any longer to harden their Bowels againſt them.

7. *Duty, to pray for their Parents.*

Seventhly, Becauſe all that Children can do is not ſufficient to requite the love and tender care of their Parents; therefore they ought to pray to God, that he would reward them, and preſerve them,

them, and keep them alive; that he would ſupply all their wants, and comfort them in all their troubles, and requite their Love, their tender care, and their great coſt and pains they have been at to bring them up, and to educate them. How happy are the Parents of ſuch Children, who are ſupplicants and interceſſors, at the Throne of Grace, for good things unto them? Such Children are the ſtrength of their Parents; they are a great bleſſing unto them.

Againſt Curſers of Parents.

If it be the Duty of Children, thus to pray to God, in behalf of their Parents, what ſhall we ſay of thoſe, who neither pray for them, nor themſelves, but live like the Beaſts that periſh, and mind nothing that's good? And if their Crime is great, who do not at all pray for their Parents; how dreadful is their Guilt, who Curſe them? What dreadful Judgments may ſuch Monſters of wickedneſs expect. *Prov.* 20. 20. *Who ſo Curſeth his Father or his Mother, his Lamp ſhall be put out in obſcure darkneſs*; that is, he ſhall be reduced unto a ſad afflicted and miſerable State; his proſperous condition

(which is compared to Light, or to a Lamp) ſhall be turned into Adverſity and Miſery, and that very great, which is expreſſed by [*obſcure darkneſs*] he ſhall be made very miſerable; his ſtate and condition in the World ſhall become moſt uncomfortable; as it is for a Man who walketh in a way that is full of Light, where he beholds a great many Objects, which afford him pleaſure and delight, ſuddenly to be deprived of all this, and to find himſelf all alone in obſcure darkneſs, without all help and comfort. By the Law of *Moſes*, ſuch ungodly and unnatural Children were without any pardon to be put to death. *Exod.* 21. 17. *He that Curſeth his Father or his Mother, ſhall ſurely be put to death.*

From what hath been ſaid, Children may ſee what their Duty is, which they owe to their Parents; which that they may perform, there are ſeveral things which ſerve as powerful Motives and Arguments to excite them.

Motives

Motives to excite Children to do these things.

First, It will tend mightily to move them to *Honour their Father and Mother*, if they consider who requires this at their hands. This Law proceedeth not from Men, but from God; It is a Law made by him who is their Maker; and therefore by right of Creation may require their Obedience: It is a Law made by their faithful preserver, and rich provider; and therefore by vertue of his daily care over them, and kindness to them, may command them what he thinks good: This is the will of their Father in Heaven, of their Lord and King, of him who will call them to an account, *and render to them according to their Works*; of him who is their greatest and best Friend, if they *do his Will and keep his Commandments*; but will be their most dreadful and terrible Enemy, if they do not obey his Voice: If therefore children have any sense of God on their Souls; if they consider his infinite greatness, power, wisdom,

1. *Motive, from the divine Commandment.*

wiſdom, juſtice, truth, faithfulneſs, mercy, and kindneſs; they cannot but endeavour to perform what he requires, when once they know what is his holy will and pleaſure. Now, as to what I ſpeak of, to wit the Duty of Children to Parents, it is plain and clear, not only from thoſe Laws which are contained in Holy Scripture, which were revealed from Heaven to Holy Men, whom God made uſe of to be the publiſhers thereof to the World: but likewiſe from the Laws of Nature, thoſe clear impreſſions which God hath made on the minds of Men in all places, and in all Ages; whereby they are taught that Children ought to honour and obey their Parents, to love them and to relieve them, and provide for them, if they ſtand in need of their help. Theſe have always been the calm and ſober thoughts of all Men; and when any were ſo wicked as to violate this ſacred Law, they were hated and abhorred by all others; and in all well govern'd States, were puniſhed according to the demerits of their Crime, and the degree of their diſobedience and perverſeneſs, either immediately by the Parents, or by publick

lick Judges, upon complaint made by Parents. The Senſe of all this ought to move Children to honour their Father and Mother, that they may approve themſelves to God, who requires them to do ſo, and that upon the ſevereſt Penalties, if they ſhall dare to diſhonour them, and diſobey them.

Secondly, To encourage Children to perform their Duty to their Parents, God hath been pleaſed to add a gracious promiſe. *That thy days may be long upon the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.* He might only have commanded them to do this, by vi tue of his abſolute Power and Soveraign Authority, which he has over all Men, without propoſing any Reward; but ſuch is his infi ite Bounty and Goodneſs, that he hath added a Promiſe to the Command, thereby to make Childrens Duty the more eaſie.

2. *Motive, from the Divine Promiſe.*

As to the Promiſe it ſelf, it is not to be underſtood abſolutely, as if all good Children ſh uld live long; promiſes of Temporal Bleſſings are made conditionally, that is, ſo far as God ſees ſuch things beſt and fitteſt for us: So that as to this promiſe of long life, God

God will beſtow it, if it be moſt for his own Glory, and the good and Benefit of Children. Oftentimes he does lengthen out the years of pious and dutiful Children; whereas the years of wicked and undutiful Children are ſhortned by their prophane and wicked Courſes; ſo that ſome of them are cut off immediately by the hand of God; and others are put to death by the hand of Man.

As for thoſe Children who live not to a great Age, tho' they are very dutiful and obedient to their Parents; God doth make up what is wanting in the number of their years here, with an everlaſting Life, and Glory in Heaven. In which caſe there's no cauſe to Complain, as if God did not fulfill his promiſe to them. For as there is no reaſon for a Man to complain, who is employed to work for ſo much a day, if his Maſter ſee it fit to free him from his Work, and pay him all his Wages before the third part of his time is out: Even ſo, if God think fit to ſet his Children at Liberty, from the toil and labour of this life, and to beſtow upon them glorious and Eternal Rewards, while they are in the

Morning

Morning or Noon, as it were, of their Age, there is no ground of complaining upon his doing ſo, but rather great matter of praiſe and thankſgiving unto him, whoſe mercy and love is infinitely great.

But beſides this Reward in the other World; there are Temporal Bleſſings which God will beſtow on thoſe who keep this Commandment. How acceptable and pleaſing to him, was the Obedience of the *Rechabites* unto their Father, tho' his Commands ſeemed very hard and ſevere, to wit, *That they ſhould drink no Wine, nor build Houſe, nor ſow ſeed, nor plant Vineyard, nor have any, but ſhould dwell in Tents*, Jer. 35. 6, 7. *&c.* And ver. 18. *Jeremiah ſaid unto the Houſe of the* Rechabites, *Thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Iſrael, becauſe you have obeyed the Command of* Jonadab *your Father, and kept all his Precepts, and done according to all that he hath commanded you: Therefore thus ſaith the Lord of Hoſts, the God of Iſrael,* Jonadab *the Son of* Rechab *ſhall not want a Man to ſtand before me for ever.* Which Words import that he would take a particular care of them, that he would be mindful of them, and have

have them in his Eye; that he would preſerve them, and ſhew them his favour and love, and continue unto them thoſe Offices and Priviledges which they enjoyed, which ſome think were, of being Scribes and Doctors of the Law, and having ſome Charge in or about the Temple.

3. *Motive, from the Example of our Bleſſed Saviour.*

Thirdly, Beſides the Command of God, and the Reward which he hath promiſed to them who honour their Parents, how ſtrong an Argument ought it to be unto all Children, to excite them to this, when they conſider the Example of their Bleſſed Lord and Maſter, their King and Saviour, *Jeſus Chriſt*? Of whom it is ſaid, *that he was ſubject unto his Parents*, *Luke* 2. 51 And if he, who was ſo much greater than his Parents, who was their Lord, their King, their Maker, their Saviour and Redeemer; if he, who was the Son of God, and thought it no Robbery to be equal with God, I ſay, if he was ſubject to his Parents, ought not all Children to be ſo to their Parents? and to eſteem it their glory to imitate their Prince and Saviour, as in his other Virtues,

ſo

ſo in his Obedience and Subjection to his Parents? Shall any Man think himſelf too good to do this, when Chriſt did it before him? Can it be too mean for a Worm to do that, which a Man, a great Man, and a mighty Prince hath done? Shall vile ſinners think themſelves abaſed and diſhonoured by doing that which was done before by him, *who knew no ſin, and in whoſe Mouth there was found no guile*, who was *holy, harmleſs, and undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners, and made higher than the Heavens*, *Heb.* 7. 26. As our Bleſſed Lord was a great and noble Pattern to us in other things, ſo particularly in his love to his Parents. When he was upon the Croſs, a little before he gave up the Ghoſt, he expreſſed how great his love was to his Mother, and how tender a care he had of her. John 19. 25, 26, 27. *Now there ſtood by the Croſs of Jeſus, his Mother, and his Mothers Siſter*, Mary *the Wife of* Cleophas, *and* Mary Magdalene. *When Jeſus therefore ſaw his Mother, and the Diſciple ſtanding by, whom he loved, he ſaith unto his Mother, Woman, behold thy Son. Then ſaith he to the Diſciple, behold thy Mother. And from that hour, that Diſciple took her unto his own*

own home. He commends his Mother to *John* (*Joseph* in all probability being dead) that he might take care of her, as of his own Mother. Tho' he was at this time in the midst of great pain and anguish, tho' his hands and his feet were nailed to the Cross, tho' his head was Crowned with Thorns, tho' he lay under the most insupportable Burden that ever Man lay under, yet, as if the sight of his Mother had made him forget all his Sufferings, and Torments, he affectionately recommends her to the Care of another, who he knew would perform all the Offices of a loving Son unto her. He knew how great an affliction it would be to her, to be deprived of the Comfort of his presence in the World; he knew to how many necessities and wants, she should be exposed by his leaving of her; and therefore he gives it in charge to the beloved Disciple, to do the Duty of a Son unto her, to be to her in his stead, to honour her, to love her, to serve her, to take care of her, and provide whatever might be fit for her. This shews all Children what is their Duty towards their Parents, to wit, that they ought to take

take care of them, so long as they live, and are able to do it; they ought with all respect and kindness, to perform unto them all those Offices, which the Laws of Nature and Christianity require.

Fourthly, May not the Examples of some Heathens, which have already been mentioned, excite Christian Children to perform their Duty to their Parents? There are a great many more instances might be added to this purpose; I shall only mention two. The first is, of the brave *Coriolanus*, that Great *Roman* Commander, who being very ill used by his Country-men, fled to the *Volscians*, who were at that time at War with the *Romans*. Within a little time after his coming amongst them, he was made General of their Forces; in which Service he had great Success against the *Romans*, gaining several Victories over them, whereby he was encouraged to approach to the very Walls of *Rome*: His Country-men were terribly alarmed with this; so that they were forced to make humble Addresses to him, to deprecate his displeasure, but to no purpose:

4. *Motive, from the Examples of some Heathens.*

purpoſe: They ſent their Prieſts in their ſacred Veſtments, but to as little Effect: But no ſooner did his Mother, attended with his Wife and Children, come to him, but he ſubmitted himſelf to her. Now, ſays he, you have overcome me indeed, when the intreaties of my Mother are added to yours; tho' *Rome* deſerve my hatred, yet for my Mothers ſake I will ſpare it; and immediately he withdrew his Army.

A ſecond Example, is that of the worthy *Athenian* Captain *Cimon*, who not being able to redeem the Corps of his Father, which was arreſted for Debt, ſold himſelf, and became a Slave, that his deceaſed Father's Body might be freed from that Arreſt that was upon it, and ſo might have honourable Burial. This great Man was famous for his Noble and Valiant Exploits, for his great courage and excellent Conduct in Military Affairs; but there was not any thing for which he was ſo much admired and loved, as for this wonderful inſtance of Affection and Reſpect to his Father.

May not ſuch ſhining Patterns amongſt the Pagans, make many Chriſtians

ſtians aſhamed, who come ſo far ſhort of them, in their Duty and Obedience to their Parents? Shall not they riſe up in Judgment and condemn Chriſtians, who tho' they have a more excellent, compleat, and perfect Rule, tho' they have a great deal more Light to direct them in their Duty to their Parents; and tho' they have much greater aſſiſtances to enable them to perform their Duty; do nevertheleſs carry themſelves ſo undutifully, and unchriſtianly, as if they had never heard of the Goſpel of Chriſt, yea, as if they had been born without any impreſſions of Natural Religion on their Minds, whereby all Nations are ſo far inſtructed and enlightned, as to acknowledge, that to honour, obey, love, ſerve, and aſſiſt our Parents, is a Duty of unqueſtionable and indiſpenſible Obligation.

The

The Concluſion, ſhewing how Children ought to improve what hath been ſaid.

From what hath been ſaid, Children may ſee how great reaſon they have to perform all thoſe offices of Love, Honour and Subjection to their Parents, that God requires of them. It remains that they ſeriouſly and impartially conſider, what their practice has been, and whether they have done thoſe things which God requires them to do towards their Father and Mother.

That you may do this to good purpoſe, it's fit that you employ ſome time in looking back on your Lives, in conſidering how you have honoured, loved, and obeyed your Parents; that you may ſee, whether you have carried your ſelves towards them, in words and deeds, as became good Children, who have a ſenſe of Religion; or whether you have not diſhonoured, neglected, and diſobeyed them.

If upon Examination of your ſelves, you find that you have done your Duty; that you have ſincerely endeavoured to obey them in all things; that you have loved them heartily, and payed them that Reſpect which you knew

knew was due unto them: Bleſs God, who hath given you to will and to do according to his good pleaſure. But becauſe there are defects and imperfections, which cleave to our exacteſt performances, therefore it is needful that you beg of God to forgive you, wherein ſoever you have been faulty, or defective in thoſe Duties you owed them. Conſider what theſe defects and imperfections are, and reſolve to amend them, and go on in doing every part of your Duty to them with greater exactneſs, and with all that perfection that's poſſible.

But if upon inquiry into your hearts and lives, you find that you have been very faulty and defective in the Duties you owe to your Parents; that you have neglected to do what you ought to have done; that inſtead of honouring them, you have diſhonoured them, you have ſlighted and deſpiſed them, you have mo k d and ſcorned them, you have reviled and reproached them; if inſtead of obeying them, you find that you have been ſtubborn and diſobedient to them, you have refuſed to follow their Counſels and Admonitions, you have done your own Will, and

and followed your own vain humour and fancy, in contempt of their Will; if instead of submitting to their corrections and chastenings, you have refused submission to them, and perhaps have rebelled against them; if instead of loving them, you have hated them, and wished, and desired their death; if instead of relieving them in their wants, and supplying them with what was necessary for them, you have wasted their substance by your riotous and extravagant Living, you have put off all bowels of compassion and tenderness towards them; if, I say, you find that you have thus carried your selves towards them, in a way so contrary to your Duty, how ought you to lament and mourn for your wickedness and folly? How ought you to accuse your selves for your great iniquity, and to aggravate your crimes by all just and fit considerations? You may in this manner expostulate the case with your selves: What a sad and unworthy Wretch am I, who have thus dishonoured, hated, and disobeyed my dear Parents, who are under God the Authors of my Being in the World, to whom I owe that I am? Who have

proved

proved ſo undutiful to them who took care of me, when I could not take care of my ſelf? who fed and cloathed me, who were at ſo great pains and charge for me, who have employed ſo much of their time and ſtrength to provide for me all neceſſary things? and yet that I ſhould prove ſo wicked as to deſpiſe them, to diſobey them, and hate them; not to ſubmit my ſelf unto them, what baſe and wicked ingratitude is it? That I, who ſhould have been a Bleſſing to them, ſhould prove a Curſe; That I who ſhould have been a Comfort to them, ſhould be the cauſe of their grief and ſorrow? That I who ſhould have been a help unto them, ſhould be ſo great a hinderance? That I who ſhould have been the ſtay and ſupport of their Old age, ſhould prove their ruine, and the cauſe of the ſpending of their days in anguiſh and trouble? What a prodigious impiety is this? What a wretched and abominable Creature am I, who have been guilty of ſuch horrid impiety? Who have had ſo little regard to thoſe who are to me in God's ſtead here in the World? What puniſhment do I not deſerve? What a wonder is it that

God hath ſpared me and pitied me, and hath not cut me off in the midſt of my diſobedience, neglect, and contempt of my Parents! That he hath not made me an Example to all others, and a ſtanding Monument of his juſt diſpleaſure! That he has not bound me hand and foot, and caſt me into utter darkneſs, and given me my portion with Hypocrites and Sinners; but hath lengthened out my years, and given me time and place to repent!

Having thus in your own minds expoſtulated the matter with your ſelves, you may in the next place adore and bleſs the Divine Goodneſs, the infinite Mercy, and aſtoniſhing Kindneſs of God towards you, in having ſpared and pitied you; in not dealing with you after your ſins, nor rewarding you after your iniquities; but that he hath been pleaſed to wait to be gracious to you. Humbly confeſs your faults and offences unto him; with great ſhame and confuſion of face, and with true grief and ſorrow of heart acknowledge your iniquities; make particular confeſſion, ſo far as you remember, of your ſtubbornneſs and diſobedience to your Parents, of your contempt and neglect

neglect of them, of your hating them, and wiſhing Evil to them, of your ſpeaking irreverently and wickedly to them, or of them, of your not ſubmitting to their Corrections, of your not heeding their Admonitions and Counſels, nor regarding their juſt Reproofs, &c. Beg of God, for Chriſt's ſake, to have mercy on you, and to blot out your Sins, and to make you what you ought to be.

After this, it is fit to form ſincere and hearty Reſolutions of doing your Duty, in all reſpects, to your Parents for the time to come; of loving, honouring, obeying, and ſerving them, as you ought to do. Reſolve to amend whatever has been amiſs and defective either in your thoughts words or deeds, with relation to them. Beg of God to ſtrengthen you in your Reſolutions; to fortify you againſt all Temptations; to inſpire you with his Fear and Love; to guide you by his good Spirit; and that he would never leave you, nor forſake you.

If the Example and Society of other wicked Children has been an occaſion of making you ſo bad, and of hardening you in your Contempt,

Stubbornneſs and Diſobedience; reſolve to break off your Familiarities with them; let them and all others know, and ſee, that you are ſorry for your Diſobedience to your Parents; for your having diſhonoured, ſlighted, and neglected them; and that you are reſolved to do ſo no more; but will, by the help of God, approve your ſelves Dutiful, Kind, and Obedient Children.

Not only muſt you in this manner make your Humble and Penitent Confeſſion to Almighty God your Heavenly Father, whom you have provoked, as by your other Sins, ſo particularly by your diſobedience to your Parents, and by your diſhonouring of them; but you muſt likewiſe confeſs unto your Parents the Crimes whereof you have been guilty againſt them; you muſt ſay as the Prodigal did, *I will ariſe, and go to my Father, and will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt Heaven, and before thee; and am no more worthy to be called thy Son.* Luke 15. 18, 19. Let your Parents ſee that you are heartily ſorry for your Offences againſt them by Word or Deed; beg of them to forgive you, and deſire them to pray to God that he would forgive you.

You

You are to be careful after this, to fulfil your Purpoſes and Reſolutions, and to perform all thoſe Duties of Love, Honour, and Obedience to your Parents, wherein you were formerly ſo defective. For this end it is fit, daily and earneſtly to beg of God, that he would direct and aſſiſt you to do what is well-pleaſing in his ſight. It is neceſſary for you to be very jealous of your deceitful and deſperately wicked Hearts; to watch over them carefully, leſt they turn aſide towards your former crooked Ways; leſt you return with the Dog to the Vomit. Watch againſt all thoſe Temptations, whereby you are moſt in danger of being ſeduced, and intangled again in your former perverſe Practices and Cuſtoms.

As you have been formerly very negligent and defective in Honouring and Obeying your Parents, endeavour for the future ſo much the more, to perform all thoſe Duties which you owe unto them, with great care and exactneſs.

As you have been great Examples of Diſobedience, ſtrive to be ſo much the greater Patterns of Obedience. En-

deavour to do all that you can; that they who have been, by your Counsels, or Examples, corrupted and made ſtubborn, and diſobedient, may be reformed and reſcued from their ſins and wickedneſs; that as you have been Inſtruments to promote Satan's Kingdom, ſo you may be zealous for the glory of God, for promoting Piety and true Virtue in the World; whereof this is no inconſiderable part; that Children honour their Father and Mother, and do all thoſe Duties with chearfulneſs unto them, which God requires.

This is the way to obtain the divine pardon, to turn away his Wrath, and to keep off thoſe heavy Judgments which are threatned againſt ſtubborn Children, and ſuch who mock and ſcorn their Parents: Or if God ſee it fit to puniſh you here, he will make your Corrections and Puniſhments, and all other things, work together for your good; and after he hath tryed you, he will beſtow upon you rewards of everlaſting Life and Glory.

As for thoſe who are ſo perverſe as to deſpiſe all Counſel and Advice, who refuſe to hearken to any Inſtructions, who

who are resolved to go on in their stubbornness and disobedience to their Parents, in slighting and vilifying them; let them remember what the Wise Man saith, *Eccles.* 11. 9. *Rejoice, O young Man, in thy Youth, and let thine heart chear thee, in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine Eyes: But know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into Judgment.*

A DISCOURSE About the RIGHT WAY Of Improving our TIME.

BIBL...

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Ephes. V. 16.

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

The Introduction.

OF all the outward Bleſſings, which God beſtows upon us, there is none ſo valuable and precious as our Time. God beſtows upon us his other Bleſſings in great variety and plenty; but in this he ſeems to be more ſparing, for it is given us not in large proportions, but as it were drop by drop, one minute after another; never two minutes together: whenever he gives us one, he takes away another. And yet how ſtrange is it to think, that a great many ſpend their time in Vanity and Folly? Time is to many like a dead Commodity; they cannot tell what to do with it. They are ready to throw it away for nothing, or for that which is little better:

ter: instead of improving and using it in virtuous and profitable actions and designs, they waste it in trifling and vanity, which is an Argument of the greatest Folly; as on the other hand, the right husbanding of Time is a great instance of true Wisdom.

The Text explained.

The Apostle having exhorted the *Ephesians* to *walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise*, he immediately subjoins [*Redeeming the time.*] Intimating thereby, that there is no better way for us to shew our selves wise, than by employing our time to good purpose, Redeeming and buying it; or, as some read the words, Buying the opportunity, or a fit occasion and season for doing good. It is a Metaphor taken from Merchants, who when they have a great likelihood and probability of making considerable gain and advantage in buying and selling, part with their pleasures, or lesser cares and concerns, that they may make a good bargain, and purchase that which they greatly desire. So the Christian, the man that is good and wise, ought to deny himself in his pleasures and outward delights, or even in his ordinary

ordinary affairs and concerns, when he has any great proſpect of doing ſomewhat conſiderable for the glory of God, the good of his Neighbour, and the benefit of his own Soul.

The Reaſon which the Apoſtle uſeth, is [*Becauſe the days are evil*] that is, either bad and ſinful, full of wickedneſs and folly; ſo that it is very hard and difficult then to be good, when ſin, like a violent and impetuous torrent, carries all down before it. This ought to make you redeem all occaſions of doing good, that you may fortifie others in Virtue and Piety, that you may reſcue thoſe that are carried down the ſtream by bad Example, and may build up your ſelves in Holineſs, and that you may be made ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might. Or [*Becauſe the days are evil*] may relate to the danger you are in through the fury and malice of your enemies, who are ready to do you all the miſchief that is in their power; the ſenſe whereof ſhould make you improve all occaſions of doing good, not knowing how ſoon you may be deprived of your preſent happy opportunities and ſeaſons for working.

Hen

How Time is to be redeemed.

The Deſign of this Diſcourſe is to ſhew you; First, How you are to redeem your Time: And, Secondly, To propoſe ſome Conſiderations to excite you to do ſo.

1. *Time to be redeemed from ſleep.*

First, You are to redeem your Time from exceſſive and immoderate ſleep. It is neceſſary for all men to refreſh their bodies with ſleep and reſt; and the ſtate of ſome mens bodies requires a great deal more than others; ſo that no exact Rules can be given about the proportion of ſleep that's proper for every one: Only in general, it is fit that all perſons redeem as much time from ſleeping, as the health of their bodies can permit; that ſo they may employ part of that time to ſome good and uſeful purpoſe, which they were wont to waſte in the ſhadow of death, as it were; whereof ſleep is the picture and repreſentation.

In the ancient Church we find many were wont to riſe up in the night to pray, that ſo they might day and night keep

keep alive in their Souls Divine impreſſions; that they might preſerve a reliſh and taſte of heavenly and ſpiritual things; that excellent Objects might not be removed too far out of their ſight. This is a practice, which, perhaps, very few in theſe cold Countries are able ſafely to imitate; eſpecially at ſome times of the year. The weakneſs and tenderneſs of ſome bodies makes it to them impracticable; becauſe it would render them unfit at other times, not only for religious performances, but for the other neceſſary actions of life. Some likewiſe have ſo little time allowed them for their repoſe in the night, that they cannot do this, in their preſent circumſtances: As for ſuch who are capable, without any ſort of inconvenience, to follow this ancient Practice, let them do it: They want not ſufficient Encouragement thereto, if they conſider that thereby they have the opportunity of flying, as it were, from theſe regions of darkneſs and miſery, of ſin and folly, unto thoſe glorious regions of light and happineſs, of purity and perfection; there to converſe with God their chieſeſt Joy; to behold his Face,

the light of his countenance; to taſte and ſee how good he is; to walk with him; to be ſatisfied with his Salvation; to drink of thoſe Rivers of unmixed pleaſure, which are in his Preſence, the ſtreams whereof make glad the City of God.

As for thoſe, who are not able to deny themſelves of their repoſe in the night ſeaſon; all that I ſhall ſay to them, is this; When at ſome times it pleaſeth God to take away their ſleep, and to keep them awake, let them redeem a few moments from vain thoughts, by lifting up their Souls to God, darting up ſome pious thoughts and fervent deſires Heaven-wards; reflecting on the Goodneſs and Love of God; admiring his glorious Perfections; calling to mind, and conſidering his gracious Providences; longing for, and breathing after that happy ſtate when they ſhall be placed above all the infirmities and frailties of the fleſh, and outward neceſſities, above Sin and Satan, and all their Enemies: And after this, they may again compoſe themſelves to ſleep. This is a way to keep the Soul awake, to entertain it in a way worthy of it, to accuſtom it

to

to the contemplation of excellent, and divine Objects, to keep Heaven always near its view; and not to ſuffer the things of another life, to be removed too far out of ſight. We ſee in what temper of mind the Spouſe was, *Cant.* 5. 2. *I ſleep, but my heart waketh.* Even amidſt her repoſe and ſleep, her thoughts were running after her deſirable and beloved Object, which poſſeſſed her heart, and filled her thoughts when ſhe was awake. And ſo it is with pious Souls ſometimes, when their thoughts have been much imployed and buſied about ſpiritual and heavenly things in the day time, they dream of them in the Night ſeaſon. *Tho' they ſleep, yet their Heart waketh.*

This watchful temper is an Excellent means to enrich the Soul; whereas ſlothfulneſs, and giving up ones ſelf to drowſineſs and ſleep, cauſeth ſpiritual beggery. *An idle Soul* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 19. 15.) *ſhall ſuffer hunger.* And *Prov.* 20. 13. *Love not ſleep, leſt thou come to Poverty: Open thine Eyes, and thou ſhalt be ſatisfied with Bread.* Then was it that *Samſon* loſt his Hair, wherein was his ſtrength, when he was aſleep. *Judg.* 16. 19.

As

As it is a fault at any time to waſte our precious hours in this ſluggiſh and lazy manner, ſo eſpecially when God affords very favourable opportunities of doing ſome great good to our ſelves or others. *He that ſleepeth in Harveſt* (ſaith the Wiſe Man,) *is a Son that cauſeth ſhame*; *Prov.* 10. 5. that is, he makes his Father and Friends aſhamed of him, and brings ſhame and diſgrace on himſelf. Now is the day of Grace, now is the acceptable time, now is the ſeaſon of gathering the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, and of making ſure an Harveſt of everlaſting Glory. *And therefore let us not ſleep, as do others; but let us watch and be ſober.* 1 *Theſ.* 5, 6.

2. *Time to be redeemed from dreſſing the Body.*

Secondly, Redeem time from dreſſing and adorning the Body: Let not more time be ſpent that way than is meet and fit. Let your firſt care every day be to dreſs and adorn the better part, to put on the true Ornaments, to cloath your ſelves with Humility, Meekneſs, Patience, Charity, and with all other Virtues, which are of great price in the ſight of God. *Put off the Works of darkneſs, and put on the Armour of Light.*

Raiſe

Raiſe your Souls towards Heaven, by ſome ſhort and fervent Ejaculations. Read the word of God with great attention and humility, with an earneſt deſire to know his will, and with a ſincere purpoſe to do it. Indeavour to feed and nouriſh your Souls by ſerious Meditation. Call on God, by humble and earneſt prayer, to pardon you, to bleſs you, to direct and proſper you in all your ways, and to ſave and preſerve you from all Evils Ghoſtly and Bodily. Form good purpoſes and ſtrong reſolutions to do what is good and right. Set the Lord always before you. Seek his Glory in all things, whether you eat or drink, or whatever elſe you do.

After having done thoſe things which are needful for the Soul, you may next do what is fit and decent as to your Attire and Cloathing, according to your Circumſtances in the World. Beware leſt you pride your ſelves in your Apparel: Do not therein gratifie your Vanity, to go beyond others of your Rank and Quality, to make your ſelves be taken notice of more than others. Too great care about adorning the outward Man, gives juſt cauſe to ſuſpect

ſpect that the chief buſineſs is neglected.

Conſider what it is that you deck and adorn with ſo much care and coſt; even a poor, vile, ſinful Body, that's full of rottenneſs and corruption; conſider that within a little while it will become a very ugly, deformed, and ſtinking Carcaſs, and be food to the Worms.

If they who beſtow ſo much time every day in painting and patching, and ſuch like things, would but beſtow a few Minutes in thinking of the Grave, and what the Body will become within a very little time, ſo vile and loathſom, that even they who do love it moſt dearly, will then avoid it, and be glad to have it removed out of their ſight; and that their face, which now they themſelves admire ſo much, and which they are ready to think every body elſe admires likewiſe, ſhall within a ſhort time be eaten thorough by vile Worms, and waſted and made ugly with Rottenneſs and Corruption, and that all its Beauty ſhall be marred: I ſay, if vain perſons would ſometimes think of theſe things, and behold themſelves now and then in this Glaſs, how would it humble them, and make them

leſs

leſs addicted to ſuch vain Imployment, and be more buſied in things of greateſt conſequence! This would turn their thoughts another way, and make them beſtow a little more pains to waſh away the Impurities of their Souls. Conſider what is written againſt all thoſe who are guilty of this vanity and extravagance in Apparel and Ornaments. *Iſa.* 3. 16. and 17. *Moreover the Lord ſaith, becauſe the daughters of* Sion *are haughty, and walk with ſtretched forth Necks and wanton Eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet; Therefore the Lord will ſmite with a Scab, the Crown of the Head of the Daughters of* Sion, &c. And verſe 24. *It ſhall come to paſs, that inſtead of ſweet ſmell, there ſhall be ſtink; and inſtead of a Girdle, a Rent; and inſtead of well ſet Hair, Baldneſs; and inſtead of a Stomacher, a girding of Sackcloth, and Burning inſtead of Beauty.*

3. *Time to be redeemed from eating and drinking.*

Thirdly, Redeem time from eating and drinking, from pampering the Body: Spend no more of your time that way than what is fit. *Make not your Belly your God*; eat and drink that you may live, that

that you may be able to perform the neceſſary actions of life; but do not live ſo as if you had nothing to do, but to eat and drink, *and to make proviſion for the fleſh, to fulfil the Luſts thereof.* Live ſoberly at all times, and uſe abſtinence and faſting ſometimes. Take not too great delight in gratifying your Palate and Appetite. God alloweth you the free and liberal uſe of his good Creatures for your health and refreſhment; but not to abuſe them to gluttony and drunkenneſs, or any other ſort of exceſs and extravagance. It is fit to uſe all thoſe periſhing things with great moderation; becauſe, *Firſt*, they are apt to be a great Snare, and to lead Men to a great deal of Sin and Folly. The Apoſtle reckons up firſt *Gluttony and Drunkenneſs*, and then *Chambering and Wantoneſs*, &c. *Rom.* 13. 13. *Intemperance* being as the Mother of the reſt. It is often the occaſion and cauſe of them. The ſin of *Sodom* was occaſioned by *their fulneſs of Bread, and abundance of Idleneſs*, Ezek. 16. 49.

Secondly, This renders the Soul unactive, and unfit for thoſe exerciſes, which chiefly belong to it to perform. The Spirits are thereby made dull and

ſleepy,

sleepy, and incapable to be attentive and serious. Watch and be sober must go together. If we are not sober and temperate, we are not fit to watch. And therefore our Saviour saith, *Luke* 21. 34. *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and so that day come upon you unawares.* So long as the Soul lodgeth in the Body, it depends much upon the state and temper of it, so that the Body, when it is clogg'd and oppressed with meat, or drowned with drink, is a very unfit Tool for the Soul to manage; yea thereby the Soul is, as it were, chained up, and cannot freely move and act. So we see that men at such times, when they are guilty of excess and intemperance, are rash and imprudent in their Counsels and Resolutions, whereof they are ashamed afterwards when they grow sober.

Thirdly, The uncertainty of these delights of Sense should dispose us sometimes to deny our selves, and not to enslave our selves unto them, and come under the tyranny of a curious and dainty Palate. A change in our outward estate will be the less surprising to us, when

when in time of plenty we now and then restrain and deny our selves in those pleasures, which we have the opportunity to pursue in our eating and drinking.

4. Time to be redeemed from Gaming.

Fourthly, Redeem time from Gaming and Recreations. Sometimes they are very needful to the Body, for your health, and to render you more fit for action and business. But you must take care that your Divertisements and Recreations be first innocent and lawful, and not contrary to the Rules and Principles of Christianity; that they be not hurtful to your selves or others, nor scandalous and offensive. Let them not be such as those of wicked men, of whom *Solomon* speaks, *Prov.* 10. 23. to whom *it is a sport to do mischief, and who make a mock of sin*; whose delight and divertisement is, in saying things that are wicked and prophane, to the hurt and grief of one or other. The *Philistines* called for *Samson*, (when he was *their Prisoner*) *to make them sport*. Judg. 16. 25. The *Babylonians* required a Song and mirth of the poor captive *Jews*, saying, *Sing us one of the Songs of* Sion *Psal.* 137. 3.

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They made it a ſport to inſult and to triumph over others in their diſtreſs; they made themſelves merry with the miſeries of others.

Let your Divertiſements and Recreations be uſed with moderation: give not your ſelves liberty to go beyond due bounds, neither as to time, nor yet as to the proportion of money you play for. There is unſpeakable hurt and prejudice that comes from ſuffering your ſelves to be too far carried away by the fancy and humour of gaming and following your Sports and Paſtimes. This does inſenſibly expoſe you to the danger of poverty, as *Solomon* tells us. *He that loveth pleaſure ſhall be a poor man, Prov.* 21. 17. This renders you unfit for all ſacred and ſerious performances, the mind being thereby filled with the images and reflections of what you ſaid and heard, of what you and others did at your Games: Your hopes and your fears, your joys and your uneaſineſs, your victories and loſſes, your ſurpriſes and diſappointments, your little debates and contentions, your indignation and reſentments, and a great many other things, too common at gaming, ſo di-

ſtract and fill your mind for a great while afterwards, that when you would be ſerious, and employ your ſelves to better purpoſe, you cannot bring your minds to that fixedneſs and ſtayedneſs that is neceſſary; you remain, as it were, drunk with your Paſtimes and Divertiſements, your thoughts reel to and fro, and cannot ſettle: You have a great deſire of returning again to your Recreations, that you may gratifie your fancy, and may gain more profit, or praiſe and applauſe. That you may not fall under thoſe inconveniencies, your beſt way is to keep out of ſuch Company as makes Gaming their Buſineſs. And if at any time it be fit for you to indulge your ſelves a little in gaming, it will not be amiſs that you ſet bounds to your ſelves; both as to your time, how long to play; and as to the quantity of money you intend to play for; that you may not either in one or t'other reſpect, exceed thoſe limits which Chriſtian prudence requires. It is very adviſable either not at all to play for money (which oft-times occaſions great ſtrivings and quarrellings, or great uncaſineſs of thought) or to play for ſo very

very little as may be next to nothing, which may not afterwards occaſion any uneaſie reflections and diſſatisfaction of mind. And if at any time you be diſpoſed, and find it expedient to play for a little more than ordinary (ſtill obſerving the Rules of diſcretion and Chriſtian prudence) it would not be unfit to make it a condition in your Game, that the Winner apply what he gains to ſome charitable uſe, which you may either then expreſly determine, or you may reſolve to give the money which ſhall be gained, to ſome diſcreet and charitable perſon, who will be ſure to beſtow it to good purpoſe. As this would afford a great pleaſure and joy to thoſe who reap ſome fruit and benefit by your Recreation and Paſtime; ſo it would afford your ſelves a greater delight and ſatisfaction, than otherwiſe you could expect by your Divertiſements. And beſides, this would prevent covetous deſires, and other evil paſſions and diſpoſitions, which uſually attend thoſe who game only, or chiefly, for profit and advantage.

As for thoſe who are apt in gaming to be tranſported into violent paſſion,

and to break out into indecent heats, it is neceſſary for ſuch perſons to give over all ſuch Divertiſements as uſe to cauſe this exceſſive fermentation of their Spirits, and which put them upon the fret. Or if at any time they think good to play at ſome Game, they ought to do it in the preſence of thoſe, who by their Authority are able to reſtrain them from every thing that is indecent and extravagant, that by degrees they may get the victory over themſelves, and may habituate themſelves to mildneſs and gentleneſs of Spirit, and may be preſerved from all the ſad conſequences of unruly paſſions.

5. Time to be redeemed from Viſiting.

Fifthly, Redeem time from Viſiting. Too many throw away their time in making vain and unneceſſary Viſits, employing themſelves on theſe occaſions in vain and impertinent chat, and fooliſh talking and jeſting, which are not convenient; in making their Obſervations, and paſſing their Cenſures upon the Words and Actions, the Modes and Cuſtoms of others; in ſlandering and back-biting; in ſowing vain and falſe Reports;

Reports; in causing Jealousies and Contentions, and doing other such like bad Offices.

Visiting is either good or bad, according as it is managed. In some cases it is very fit and necessary to visit your Friends and Neighbours, to keep up thereby a friendly and neighbourly Correspondence, to offer your help and service to them when there is need of it, to sympathize with them when they are in any sort of trouble or distress, and to assist them to bear their burdens, whether of body or mind, or outward estate.

Sometimes the Laws of Civility and Discretion require that you visit those who have witnessed great Civility and Respect towards you. Sometimes the good Offices and generous Favours of some persons to you, require that you should express your grateful sense of their kindness and generosity, by all possible instances of affection and esteem, and particularly by visiting of them now and then, which is a very easie and a small return for those obligations they have laid upon you.

You must beware of visiting or frequenting the company of those who

are very lewd and wicked, by whose converſation you are in great danger of being corrupted, whoſe example is ready to infect you. When you ſee a Houſe marked for the Plague, you are careful not to go into it, you keep your ſelves at a good diſtance from it, that you may not run the hazard of infection. The Love which you have for life makes you do all you can to preſerve it. Ought you not then to be as careful to keep out of the company of prophane perſons, whoſe throat is an open ſepulchre, whoſe mouths are full of blaſphemy and curſing, whoſe breath is very infectious, whoſe words and actions are full of moſt deadly poiſon, whereby your Souls are in danger of being corrupted and deſtroyed for ever? *Enter not into the path of the wicked*, ſaith *Solomon*, *and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, paſs not by it, turn from it, and paſs away*, Prov. 4. 14, 15. And *Chap.* 5. 8. He adviſeth young men to *remove their way far from the ſtrange woman, and not to come nigh the door of her houſe.*

It is true, ſometimes your neceſſary affairs may oblige you to be in the company of very wicked perſons. This

muſt

must needs happen, especially if men have a great deal of business in the World. But in this case, when you are under this necessity of being in such company, beware lest by word or deed you approve or countenance any thing that is bad and wicked in them; and if you cannot do them good, beware lest they do you hurt; get away from them speedily, like a Bird out of the snare of the Fowler.

Sometimes likewise your Relation wherein you stand to some persons, or your Calling and Circumstances wherein God hath placed you, may make it your Duty to be often with those who are very bad persons; but then you ought to be, *First*, possessed with a great abhorrence of what is evil in them, and in no manner to approve their sin and folly. Have no Communion with their unfruitful works of darkness. *Secondly*, You ought to make use of all favourable opportunities to endeavour to make them better, and to rescue them from their evil ways and doings. If you observe these things, you are not partakers with them in their sins, and therefore God will not lay them to your charge.

If at any time atheistical and prophane persons follow after you, and thrust themselves into your Company, beware of them, and shake off their Society, unless you converse with them with a design to reform them, and to bring them off from their evil practices, and have ground to hope that you may do them good. But when after having tryed twice or thrice to make them better, you find you only cast Pearls before Swine, and that there is more danger of getting hurt by them, than of doing them good, it is fit that you deal roundly and plainly with them, and that you let them know, that so long as they are no better, you desire to be excused, if you do not keep company with them. Tho' plainness is very necessary in this case, yet it is fit that it be tempered with all the discretion and sweetness that's possible, otherwise it may do more hurt than good. Endeavour to make such persons sensible that you are only an Enemy to their Vices, and that as for their persons you will be always ready to do them all good offices.

Secondly, As you ought carefully to avoid the company of those who are prophane

prophane and atheiſtical perſons, ſo it is your intereſt, as well as Duty, to viſit thoſe who are good and religious. *They who feared the Lord* (ſaith *Malachi, ch.* 3. 16.) *ſpake often one to another.* When you have the opportunity of enjoying the company of ſuch perſons, make the beſt uſe of it that you can. *Conſider one another to provoke unto love, and to good works*, Heb. 10. 24. *Exhort one another daily*, Heb. 3. 13. Admoniſh, comfort, and, in a friendly and loving manner, reprove one another, as there is need. Make uſe of one anothers Counſel and Advice in any thing that is doubtful and difficult. By all diſcreet and prudent ways endeavour to learn ſome good and uſeful thing from good and wiſe perſons, with whom you have occaſion to converſe. *Counſel in the heart of a man*, ſaith *Solomon, is as deep waters; but a man of underſtanding draws it out*, Prov. 20. 5. Counſel, that is, a skill and dexterity to give good Advice and Counſel, and to talk of things which tend to make men wiſer and better. This in the heart of a wiſe man is like deep waters, that is, it makes no great noiſe (the wiſeſt men being alſo the modeſteſt) and is

not come at without ſome pains, and ſome prudent Arts and Methods: But a man of underſtanding draws it out, that is, by diſcreet and ſeaſonable queſtions and other fit ways, he gives his wiſe Friend an opportunity to diſcourſe, to communicate his thoughts, and to diſcover his wiſdom and experience.

Beware leſt in good Company your Diſcourſe vaniſh into air and ſmoak; leſt it be too trifling, and about things vain and impertinent. *Let your words be ſeaſoned with ſalt, miniſtring grace to the hearers*, Col. 4. 6. Endeavour to receive benefit from the Society of thoſe who are good and wiſe, and to do them good, ſo far as you can, by your Society.

It is true, it is not only lawful, but ſometimes very convenient and neceſſary, when virtuous and excellent perſons meet together, that they recreate and divert themſelves a little by chearfulneſs and innocent mirth, that thereby their minds may be made more fit for ſerious and ſacred things. Such is the ſtate and condition of man, while in the body, that his Soul cannot be always employed about thoſe things

which

which are of a Divine and Spiritual Nature: This vigour and ſtrength of Soul is not, perhaps, attained to by any on this ſide the Grave. However, our care muſt be, that the bent and inclination of our hearts be toward thoſe things that are good and uſeful. This muſt be our buſineſs, our way and courſe, to be good, and to do good: And as for our Recreations and Divertiſements, they muſt only be ſubſervient to the other.

6. Time to be redeemed from worldly Buſineſs.

Sixthly, Redeem time from your ordinary cares and worldly buſineſs, that you may do ſome great good for the glory of God, and benefit of Mankind. In the ordinary courſe of your lives you muſt mind the buſineſs of your Calling, according to your ſetled and uſual Method: but then you are ſtill to remember, to let the concerns of your Soul take place and be preferred. *Firſt ſeek the Kingdom of God, and his Righteouſneſs*, Mat. 6. 33. At ſome times it is fit to deny your ſelves in the affairs and concerns of this life, to leave off your ordinary work and labour for ſome time, when your great Lord and Maſter affords you ſome

ſome extraordinary opportunity for doing good to your Chriſtian Brother, or to your own Souls: Then you muſt ſell things of leſſer value, that you may buy time for doing that which will make you rich in the true Riches; that you may edifie your Brother, and build up your ſelves in true Virtue.

The great matter is to know when you are to do ſo. You muſt not every time when a ſudden thought ariſeth in your mind, moving you to leave your Plough, or your Trade and Calling, and to give up your ſelves to ſome Acts of Religion and Devotion; you muſt not, I ſay, preſently ſet on this the ſtamp or ſeal of a Divine Inſpiration, and a Call from Heaven. This, if not taken heed to, may lead you into great miſtakes and errours, and very dangerous deluſions. Sometimes Melancholy, or other bodily Diſtempers, may give occaſion to a great many warm fancies and imaginations: Therefore you are not to follow thoſe private motions and inclinations, if you are not ſome other way determined thereto, by ſome concurring evidence of the hand of God. For Example, if, when you are moved in your own

mind

mind to do ſome very good and pious work, there happen about the ſame time an outward Call to do the ſame thing, you may conclude there is ſomewhat extraordinary in this to determine you. By an outward Call, I do not mean any extraordinary Voice from Heaven: that's not to be expected; but a Call by ſome good, wiſe, and diſcreet perſon, who unexpectedly deſires and invites you to do that, which before his ſpeaking of it to you, you found your own heart moved and inclined you to. In which caſe you have a very mighty encouragement, both from the goodneſs and uſefulneſs of the thing it ſelf, and from the Call and invitation which you have had from another, of whoſe wiſdom and piety you are ſufficiently aſſured. Tho' there be no more but this Call from Man, it is of great weight to move you, and to determine you in this manner to redeem your time from your ordinary labour, when there is ſome extraordinary occaſion of doing ſomewhat for the honour of God, or the good of men. Thus if at any time you are invited to comfort one that is in any great trouble of body or mind,

or

or in any other great distress and affliction; if there be any thing in your power to do for the comfort and encouragement of such a person, you ought to shew your readiness to do your utmost for his help and support. You know not but the Lord may make use of you (however weak and unfit you may think your selves) to serve the designs of his Mercy and Love. Likewise, if you are called to reconcile those that are at variance; to see if you can awaken a person from his sin and folly, especially when the Lord's hand is upon him; to give your Counsel and Advice in some extraordinary case, where it is judged needful for you so to do: In these and the like cases you ought chearfully to sacrifice your private gain and advantage, and to let your lesser cares give place to those of a more publick and considerable nature. These things you are only to do, so far as the necessity of your own occasions will permit. They who are setled in a Calling, and have a Family, are under a very strict obligation to take care of their Family, and to mind their Calling and Employment; they must not neglect those necessary

Duties

Duties which God hath given them to do in their ſeveral ſtations. The Scripture accounts them worſe than Infidels, who provide not for their Houſe, and thoſe of their own Family. But if the Circumſtances of your affairs will permit you to comply with the Opportunities of performing ſome eminent acts of Piety and Zeal, you ought not to neglect them: God will not fail plentifully to reward your Love to him, and your Zeal for his Glory.

7. Times to be redeemed from Idleneſs.

Seventhly, Redeem your time from idleneſs, and an uſeleſs way of living in the World. A great many do not waſte much time in ſleep, in dreſſing and adorning of their bodies, in eating and in drinking, in gaming or in viſiting, and yet they waſte their time: But how? in doing nothing, in entertaining themſelves with the vain imaginations of their fooliſh minds, feeding on the Wind, purſuing dreams, and catching at ſhadows, building Caſtles in the Air, and ſporting themſelves with their own vain conceits and fooliſh fancies. *Their Eyes are*, as *Solomon* tells us, *in the ends of*

of the Earth, Prov. 17. 24. They mind thoſe things moſt which concern them leaſt. They buſie themſelves about what others ſay and do, but do nothing themſelves to any good purpoſe. Some men are full of vain and uſeleſs contrivances, wherewith they do indeed buſie themſelves: But to what end? When all their deſigns and vain contrivances are accompliſhed, they are but as ſo many Spiders Webs, only fit to catch flyes. This is to be buſie in Trifles, to be imployed in doing as good as nothing. Thus there be ſome who purſue a ſtudious life night and day, with a wonderful diligence; but their ſtudies being only in impertinent books, and about deſigns of no uſe, or perhaps of very bad uſe, they gain nothing thereby; yea ſo far are they from reaping any benefit by their great pains and labour, that they are unſpeakable loſers; they loſe their time, and ſometimes they loſe their Wealth, and their Health, if not their Reaſon and Underſtanding.

Conſider, *firſt*, how unworthy this ſort of life is of men and of Chriſtians? God hath made you to be uſeful, to glorifie him, to do good in the

World

World, to become daily more and more holy and religious, to grow in grace, and to perfect holineſs in his fear; and not to be like an uſeleſs log, or an inſignificant Cypher, not to be barren and unfruitful in his Vineyard. Strive therefore to live up to the end and deſign of your being in the World, to improve your ſelves in Piety and Virtue, to do ſomewhat that may be of real advantage to the Souls and Bodies of others.

Secondly, conſider how dangerous a thing it is to live an idle, vain, and unuſeful life. God hath promiſed Men his protection, only when they are in the way of their Calling, when they imploy themſelves in that ſtate of life, wherein by his Providence he hath ſetled them in the World. So the Pſalmiſt inſtructs us, *Pſal.* 91. 11. *He ſhall give his Angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*; that is, in all honeſt and lawful undertakings, and in all actions that belong to your Calling. So that if you are idle, and give up your ſelves to a lazy and uſeleſs manner of living in the World, doing nothing that's profitable to your ſelves or others, you put your ſelves out of God's

God's protection, and thereby you give the Devil advantage over you, and you lay your ſelves open to all his Temptations.

Thirdly, Conſider that the end of this idle and uſeleſs life is very ſad. *Caſt the unprofitable Servant into utter darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth*, *Math.* 25. 30. Not only ſhall wicked Servants be caſt into utter darkneſs, but alſo unprofitable Servants, *who hide their Talents in a Napkin*; that is, who do not imploy to any good purpoſe thoſe Gifts which God beſtows upon them, who ſtand idle all the day long in the Vineyard.

8. *Time to be redeemed in ſacred performances, by doing them in the beſt manner.*

Eighthly, Redeem time in your ſacred and religious Duties, and Performances, by endeavouring to do them in the beſt and perfecteſt manner you can. When you read, and pray, and meditate, and examine your ſelves, and hear the word of God preached, and ſing his praiſes, and partake of the holy Sacrament, and perform other acts of Religion and Piety, in a lifeleſs, dull, unconcerned and formal manner, you loſe your time; and

and therefore when by due reflection upon your ways, you find that you do ſo, endeavour afterwards to redeem it, by greater watchfulneſs and ſeriouſneſs; otherwiſe you may go on a great while in a courſe of Devotion to very little purpoſe, if you do not ſtir up your ſelves to do the beſt that's in your power to do by God's help.

Thus when you find that you have read the Word of God in a careleſs and negligent manner, without conſidering whoſe Word it is, and for what end it is written, and without thoſe diſpoſitions of mind that are neceſſary; you muſt afterwards endeavour to redeem the time, by being more careful to read that ſacred Book with greater reverence and ſeriouſneſs, and with greater pleaſure and delight. Pray to God more heartily for his direction and aſſiſtance. Meditate more attentively on what you read, and lay it up in your hearts, that it may be always in a readineſs for your uſe, as the rule of your lives.

If you find that you have loſt your time in prayer, by not making your Addreſſes to God with a deep humility and reverence, with unfeigned Faith,

Faith, and fervent Love, and with great earneſtneſs, ſincerity, and importunity; endeavour afterwards to pray with all poſſible humility and reverence, with greater Faith and Confidence, and with a mighty earneſtneſs and fervency of Spirit: Study to have your Souls poſſeſſed with a deeper ſenſe of your wants and neceſſities, that you may beg ſupplies of all needful things from him who can help you to the utmoſt. Be more ſenſible of the greatneſs of your ſins, and of the many hainous aggravations that attend them, that you may make humble confeſſion of them with true ſorrow and contrition. Conſider the danger to which your Hypocriſie, or formality and lukewarmneſs in religious Duties do expoſe you, that you may with great integrity and uprightneſs of Soul, make your Addreſſes to the ſearcher of Hearts, and tryer of the Reins, who takes pleaſure in the hearty and chearful ſervices of thoſe who draw near unto him. Be poſſeſſed with more lively impreſſions of the Divine Power and Greatneſs, of the Juſtice, Holineſs, Goodneſs, Mercy and Faithfulneſs of God, that the ſenſe thereof may make you adore him, and call

call upon him in ſuch a manner as is ſuitable to ſo glorious a Majeſty.

If you find that the time you have ſet apart for ſelf Examination has been loſt, by a negligent performance of this Duty, by your not being in good earneſt, when you pretended to call your ſelves to an account: Endeavour to redeem the time, by ſearching your hearts, and enquiring into your ways with greater care and exactneſs. Examine and try your ſelves, as in the ſight of God, as Men that are in good earneſt to ſave their Souls from everlaſting condemnation. Deal impartially with your ſelves; do not extenuate your own Faults, but aggravate them by all juſt and fit conſiderations: Endeavour to be deeply touch'd with hearty Contrition and real Grief and Sorrow for them; let your repentance in all regards be more ſincere, and unfeigned, and your purpoſes and reſolutions more ſtrong and ſteady. If you find that you have reflected on God's Mercies and Favours to you, without that grateful ſenſe which you ought to have had thereof, and without making ſuitable returns, ſo far as you were able by his Grace, for his great

great and undeſerved goodneſs; endeavour afterwards to employ your thoughts on ſo delightful a ſubject, as is the Divine Love and Goodneſs, with greater pleaſure, and with a more lively ſenſe thereof than you have been wont. Let the conſideration of the love and goodneſs of God, powerfully move you, and prevail with you to do ſomewhat which may teſtifie the reality of your gratitude, ſomewhat that may be of real benefit to the Souls or Bodies of others.

If you find that you have been very formal and careleſs in performing what relates to the publick Worſhip, endeavour to redeem the time, by being more ſincere and devout. For Example, if you have heard the Word of God read and preached, in a trifling and unconcerned manner, without thoſe diſpoſitions of mind which were requiſite in a Chriſtian Hearer, and in an humble Diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt; if you have attended on ſuch occaſions, more out of compliance with Cuſtom, and the Example of others, than out of Conſcience, and from Principles of true Religion and Devotion; Conſider that this is to loſe time, and, under an appearance

pearance of Religion, to remain without any thing of it in reality. You must therefore afterwards endeavour to hear the Word of God in another manner, to wit, as the Law and Rule of your Lives, as that which is given you of God to make you wise and good, and to fit you for everlasting Happiness and Glory; you must, as new born Babes, desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that your Souls may grow thereby. You must hear it with great reverence and attention, and with humble and tractable minds; you must study to have it ingrafted in your hearts, that it may abide there as a Scion in a stock, and may grow and bear fruit unto everlasting life. You must reflect on what you hear; when you leave the Church, you must not lay aside all further thinking on what has been read or preached to you; you are to talk a little with your own hearts about those things, and to call to mind any thing you heard, which tends to make you wiser and better: Endeavour to have it deeply imprinted on your Souls, that it may prove unto you the Power of God unto Salvation, the savour of life unto life.

If

If you find that you have been too often guilty of singing the Praises of God with your mouths only, without any melody in your hearts, without any real sense of the greatness and power, of the kindness and love, of the patience and long-suffering, of the truth and faithfulness of him whom you praise and celebrate: Endeavour to be more devout and serious in that part of Worship; sing unto God, not only with you Voice, but with your Heart, which is the chief thing that God looks to. Study to raise your Souls to him, as well as to lift up your Voices when you sing his praises. Stir up all within you to bless his holy Name, *who forgiveth all your Iniquities, and healeth all your diseases, who crowneth you with loving kindness and tender mercies*, who prevents you every Morning, and follows you all the day long, with many signal instances of his Fatherly care and love, giving you richly all things to enjoy for life and godliness.

If you find that you joyn in the Publick Prayers without any due Sense of God upon your Souls, and without any real impression of those things to which

which you ſay *Amen*; if you find that you repeat ſome words as do others, but in the mean time your minds are buſie in purſuing ſhadows, in thinking of your Trades and Sports, or Paſtimes, *&c.* be aſhamed that you do thus loſe your precious time, that you are guilty of ſuch trifling in the moſt ſerious and ſacred action: Endeavour to be more affected with a right ſenſe about what you do, that you may offer up unto God the Sacrifices of broken and contrite hearts, that you may pour out your hearts before him, and may worſhip him with all your Soul and Mind. Bid farewell to your Worldly, Cares and to your Pleaſures, and Vanities, when you come into his preſence to pay your homage to him. Serve him with your beſt affections, with the ſtrength and vigour of your deſires, and with all your power and might. If you do this, you may then expect, with great aſſurance and confidence, that God will give ear unto you, and ſatisfy your longing Souls with good things, he will make you taſte and ſee how good he is. But if you pray without being in good earneſt, your Sacrifices will be an abomination to him,

he will not regard your Prayers, nor take any notice of you: He will answer you according to the multitude of your Idols.

If you find that you lose time by your communicating in a careless and formal manner, without considering the end and design of that holy Institution, and without indeavouring to prepare your selves as you ought to do, that you may eat and drink worthily at the Table of the Lord; study to redeem this loss, by partaking of this Sacrament for the time to come in a more devout and religious manner: Be careful to approach with greater love and gratitude unto the Table of your Lord, who not only allows you to come, but kindly and lovingly invites and encourages you to do so. Come with your Souls burning with love to him who dyed for you, and who appointed you this Sacrament, that therein you might remember his wonderful love, and his astonishing compassion and mercy, which he hath testified in laying down his life for sinners, that he might purchase to them everlasting Life and Glory, even to as many as repent and believe the Gospel.

Come

Come with your hearts deeply wounded and pierced with ſorrow for your ſins and follies, which were the cauſe of ſo ſhameful, ſo painful, and ſo curſed a death to your deareſt Lord and Saviour. Come with your Souls full of ſincere and hearty purpoſes and reſolutions of being new Creatures, not to live any more unto your ſelves, or unto the World, but to him who dyed for you. Come with your Souls likewiſe enlarged with thoughts of kindneſs, and unfeigned Charity to all men, with your minds delivered from all bitterneſs and wrath, from all malice and envy, that you may eat and drink at this Feaſt of Love, with ſuitable diſpoſitions of univerſal Love and Charity. Come with a great deſire to obtain ſtrength from the God of your Salvation, that you may be able to fight the good fight of Faith, and may at laſt lay hold on Eternal Life.

In this manner you ought to endeavour to redeem the time, by doubling your care and diligence in all thoſe Duties of Religion, in the performance whereof you have been formerly faulty and defective. Thus you are to do likewiſe in every other Action which

you perform to the glory of God. When you find that you have been too formal and careleſs in what you have done and ſaid for God; for Example, in admoniſhing others, in inſtructing them, in reproving them, in comforting them, *&c.* endeavour to redeem time, by doing thoſe things with greater ſincerity and zeal, with a more pure regard to the Glory of God, with a greater deſire to approve your ſelves unto him, who gives you the opportunity of doing ſomewhat for his Honour, and with a greater Charity to the Souls of men.

Depend on God for a Bleſſing in all your endeavours, beg of him that he may direct and aſſiſt you to do that which is good and well pleaſing unto him, and that he may ſo diſpoſe the hearts of thoſe whom you admoniſh, inſtruct, reprove, or comfort, that what you ſpeak to them may not be loſt, but may have the deſired effect, for the glory of God, and their happineſs and welfare.

From what hath been ſaid, you may ſee how you ought to redeem your time: The next thing which I propoſed to ſpeak to, was, to ſuggeſt

geſt to you ſome Conſiderations to excite you to do ſo.

Some Motives to excite you to do theſe things.

Firſt, Conſider how ſhort your time is. Your life is compared to a *Vapour, which appears for a little time, and then vaniſheth away. Jam.* 4. 14. It makes a little ſhew and appearance for a while, and then it is gone. It is compared to a *Poſt*, to the *Swift Ships*, and to the *Eagle that haſteth to the Prey*, *Job* 9. 25, 26. And to the *Wind*, and to a *Weaver's ſhuttle*, *Job.* 7. 6, 7. All which Compariſons ſerve to expreſs how ſhort and ſwift our time is, how ſuddenly it flies away and is gone. *Man that is born of a Woman* (ſaith *Job*, *chap.* 14. 1.) *is of few days.* And *Jacob*, (when he was a great deal older than men live to be now, even 130 years old) told *Pharaoh*, ſaying, *Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been.* What are 40, or 60, or 80 years, when a man lives ſo long, and looks back upon them all? They appear to him but like a ſhadow, or

1. *Motive, from the ſhortneſs of your Time.*

as a Dream, or like a Tale that is told. Ought not this to move you to be good husbands of your ſhort time? If it were in your own power to diſpoſe of it, according to your own humour and fancy, you might then be pardoned to delay your great Work and Buſineſs till you thought good: But now that it is not in your power to lengthen out your time one Minute, what a madneſs is it for you to put off and neglect your greateſt and chiefeſt Concern? Now therefore be ſo wiſe as to make good uſe of your preſent opportunities and occaſions of doing good. That you may work out your Salvation with fear and trembling, and may make your calling and your Election ſure, work while the day laſts, for the night cometh wherein you cannot work.

If a man who is guilty of Treaſon, or Rebellion againſt his Prince, or of any other great Crime which deſerves death, were allowed a few days to ſue out his Pardon, that he might ſecure his Life and Eſtate, would he not improve with great care and diligence that little time? To be ſure he would not loſe one moment of it: And tho' perhaps at other times, he was wont

to

to give up himſelf to his pleaſures and paſtimes, and to mind little elſe, but the gratifying his Luſts and Paſſions, and his vanity and folly; yet now that his Life and Fortune lye at the ſtake, you ſhould ſee ſuch a man changed in a moment: You ſhould ſee him, with great application of mind, with the utmoſt diligence imploying his time, running from place to place, from one perſon to another, according as his great and important buſineſs and concern required. How readily would ſuch a perſon redeem his time, not only from idleneſs, from gaming, from impertinent Viſits, and from dreſſing and adorning of his Body, and the like, but even from eating and drinking, and from his reſt and repoſe in the night? The deſire of preſerving his life would ſo fill his thoughts, as to make him forget almoſt every thing elſe. What would you think or ſay, if you ſhould ſee a man in ſuch circumſtances wholly unconcerned and careleſs, ſpending his time in gaming, or idleneſs, in making impertinent Viſits, in rioting and drinking, and the like, and doing nothing at all to obtain his pardon, and to ſecure his life

and fortune? Doubtleſs you would look upon ſuch a man as void of common underſtanding, fit only for *Bedlam*, or not worthy to live, who knew no better to make uſe of his ſhort time, to preſerve his life, which Nature teacheth all men to do by all honeſt and lawful means.

It is eaſie for you to make application of all this to your ſelves. You are by your ſins Enemies to God, Rebels againſt your Lord and King, whereby you are in danger of everlaſting death and deſtruction. But God in his infinite mercy gives you time to ſue out your Pardon, which he offers you upon the moſt juſt and reaſonable conditions; *only believe and repent, and you ſhall be ſaved*: He will have mercy upon you, and blot out your iniquities. Be therefore ſo wiſe as to husband well this ſhort time which God beſtows on you for this purpoſe: Redeem it as much as you can, from all vain and unneceſſary things, that you may obtain forgiveneſs of Sins, and the aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit, to enable you afterwards to walk in newneſs of life.

But if inſtead of minding this great and

and important concern of your Souls, you give up your ſelves to ſin and folly, and indulge your ſelves in your mad and wicked practices, and thereby provoke God yet more and more againſt you, how juſt will your judgment and condemnation be? If you will not be ſaved, if you will not turn to the Lord that you may live, if you will not believe, repent, and amend; what remains? you ſhall certainly dye, and be miſerable for ever. They that will not be happy, ſhall not be happy. The wrath of God ſhall abide upon them.

Secondly, Conſider that as your time is very ſhort, ſo it is moſt uncertain. What do you know whether your Sun ſhall decline leaſurely, or whether it may not go down ſuddenly, when you think it is not yet come to the noon-tide of the day? You are not ſure to live till you come to a good old Age. How many ſickneſſes and diſtempers, and how many ſudden accidents are there in the way, which may ſhorten your day, and cauſe your Sun to ſet, when you think it ſhines with its greateſt force and luſtre?

2. *Motive, from the uncertainty of your Time.*

Sometimes a Candle is blown out by the Wind, or ſnufft out undeſignedly, when it is not yet half burnt. And ſo the life of Man is often extinguiſhed by outward accidents, when by the courſe of Nature, it might have been prolonged much further.

How many come forth into the World, and give great appearances of making a very conſiderable figure in it by their Wiſdom and Sagacity, their good Conduct, and Addreſs, their excellent Parts and uſeful Learning, their Courage and Valour, their charming Eloquence, and clear and diſtinct Reaſoning, or by their ſhining Piety and burning Zeal? But do not you ſee how ſuddenly they are gone? they are hurried away by death, and you neither ſee them nor hear of them any more.

There is nothing certain as to your time, but its ſhortneſs and uncertainty. Nothing can ſecure you againſt an unexpected blow by death, when God ſees fit to give charge to the King of terrors to knock you down. Youth and ſtrength cannot do it; for how many dye when their Breaſts are full of milk, and their bones are moiſtened

ed with marrow? Too great abundance of Blood and Spirits do sometimes oppress and stifle the life of Man. Wealth and Riches cannot secure you: How many great and wealthy men have been suddenly carried away as with a Flood, when their Coffers were full of Silver and Gold, when they had all that heart could wish? Even their Wealth proved the bait which allured idle, covetous, and desperate persons, to break into their Houses and rob them, not only of their Treasure, but of their lives.

Greatness of Power and earthly Honour and Dignity are not able to do it: Crowns and Scepters, Castles and Palaces, a wise Council, and great Armies, are not able to protect Princes from the violent and desperate attempts of Men who are prodigal of their lives. How many of those who have been most famous in the World for their Power and Greatness, have been very unexpectedly removed by a violent and sudden death? When they have been in their greatest heighth, at the very top of Earthly Felicity, and full of the deepest Projects and Designs; when they made account to

make the Earth, as it were, to tremble; to humble and to mortifie their Enemies, to enlarge their own Dominions, or to enſlave their Subjects, even then Death gave them a ſudden blow, and ſo there was an end of them and their deſigns together.

But may not Wiſdom and Underſtanding, great Learning, and skill in various Arts and Sciences, do ſomewhat to ſecure men from the ſudden blow of Death? No, all this cannot do it: We ſee even Wiſe men ſuddenly and unexpectedly removed from us by death, as well as others. In the midſt of their uſeful Studies, and excellent contrivances, and deſigns, the King of terrors puts a ſtop to them, and in the twinkling of an Eye they are gone, and all their thoughts are laid aſleep. So vain a thing is Man, and even the wiſeſt Man; and ſo uncertain is his time.

Conſider that Death can enter by a thouſand doors. Every pore in your Body is a gate wide enough for Death to enter in at. Do not you ſee what a ſmall thing makes way for Death? The prick of a Thorn, or a Splinter of Wood does it ſometimes,

by occaſioning a Fever, or a Gangrene. How quickly are ſome removed by violent and unexpected Diſtempers, and ſometimes on a ſudden are ſtruck dead, you cannot tell how? Have not ſome dyed through an exceſs of joy, and others through immoderate grief; ſome by exceſſive laughter, and others by too much mourning and weeping? Some have dyed with a fright or ſudden fear: ſome by the violence of their anger and wrath, and others by an exceſs of love. How many have been killed with over much care and too great watching? and others have occaſioned their own death by idleneſs and too much ſleep: Some have killed themſelves with eating and drinking, and others have done it by too great abſtinence and faſting. Have not ſome dyed while they have been at Meals, by a Crumb or a little Bone, or ſome ſuch very ſmall matter? When they were thinking to repair their ſtrength, and to fit themſelves for going on with their buſineſs and work; that which they did to ſave and lengthen out their lives, did ſhorten them, and put an end to them. May not

this inſtance alone ſhew you the great uncertainty of your time, and how neceſſary it is to redeem it?

But beſides all this, conſider that when you go abroad, you are in danger from innumerable accidents. You may be killed by the noiſom ſteams of the Earth, by ſome infectious quality in the Air, by the Beaſts of the field, by the teeth of Dogs, by the horns of mad Oxen, or by the heels of wild Horſes. You are likewiſe in danger from the winged Creatures, the leaſt of whom have Weapons ſufficient to deſtroy you, if God by his Power and Juſtice arm them againſt you.

Valer. Max. lib. 9. cap. 12. How remarkable was the manner of the death of *Æſchylus*, an ancient Poet in *Sicily*, who as he ſate in a Sunny place without the Walls of the City, was killed by a Tortoiſe, which an Eagle let fall on his head.

And no leſs memorable is the Story which is mentioned in the Book of Martyrs, of one *Burton*, Bailiff of *Crowland* in *Lincolnſhire*, who pretending to be a Friend to the Reformation in King *Edward*'s time; after the King's death began to ſet up the Popiſh Maſs again,

and would have beaten the Curate, if he had not complied with his deſign: But ſee how the Lord's hand overtook him; as he came riding from *Fenbank* one day, a Crow flying over his head, let fall her excrements upon his face, the noiſom ſcent whereof ſo annoyed his ſtomach, that he never ceaſed vomiting till he came home: And after falling deadly ſick, would never receive any meat, but vomited ſtill, and complained of that ſtink, curſing the Crow that had poiſoned him, and in a few days he died without giving any ſign of his repentance for his former wicked life.

Beſides the danger you are in from unreaſonable Creatures, are you not alſo ſometimes in hazard from men, who are mad either through the diſtemper of their Brain, or through their violent Malice and Envy? *Let a Bear robbed of her Whelps* (ſaith *Solomon*) *meet a man rather than a fool in his folly*, Prov. 17. 12. And not only are your Lives in danger from unreaſonable Creatures and from Men, but likewiſe from the Spirits of Darkneſs, unleſs reſtrained by the mighty Power of God. Theſe are Enemies of great

Power

Power, and of as great Malice: But your heavenly Father keeps them as it were in chains, and ſets bounds to their rage and fury, that they cannot hurt you ſo much as in a hair of your head, without the Divine permiſſion. But further; ſo uncertain is your time, that there is not a ſtone, nor a block in your way, but it may be an occaſion of your ſtumbling and falling into the ſnares of Death. And ſometimes when there is no ſuch block in your way, you are not ſecure from danger: One foot may prove a ſtumbling-block to the other, and an occaſion of your falling into the hands of Death.

And more than all this; in how great danger are your Lives from Fire and from Water, from Heat and Cold, from Storms and Tempeſts, from Thunder and Lightning, and many other things, the ſtroke whereof you cannot prevent nor foreſee? God hath in ſtore the Sword, the Famine and Peſtilence, and innumerable Judgments and Plagues, whereby he can cut you off, and ſhorten your Lives. When you are in your houſes, and think your ſelves in ſafety, you know not but that Death is even there, and that your

Grave

Grave is ready for you: By a ſudden Wind, by an Earthquake, or by a decay in the Foundation, or ſome other part of the Building, the houſe may fall down about your ears, and prove your burying place.

From all which you may conclude, that your time is the moſt uncertain thing in the World. Ought you not therefore to make good uſe of it while it laſts, not knowing how ſoon and ſuddenly it may be at an end?

Thirdly, Conſider how great and difficult a work you have to do; a work that requires a great part of your time, and worthy of all your time. How hard is it to work out your Salvation, to make your Calling and Election ſure, to ſtrive to enter in at the ſtrait gate, to be born again, to be made new Creatures, to be renewed in the Spirit of your mind, to put off the works of darkneſs, and to put on the armour of light; to add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godlineſs; and to godli-

3. *Motive, from the greatneſs and difficulty of the work you have to do.*

godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs; and to brotherly kindneſs, charity? To have the image of God renewed in your Souls, to be made partakers of the Divine Nature, to eſcape the corruptions which are in the World through luſt; to be comformed to the Example of your Bleſſed Lord and Maſter, in thoſe Virtues wherein you ought to imitate him; to learn of him who was meek and lowly; to go about as he did, doing good to the Souls and Bodies of men; to be zealous for God, and holy as he who called you is holy in all manner of converſation?

How great a work is it to overcome your ſelves? To become vile and baſe in your own eyes, to think meanly of your ſelves, and to be willing that others ſhould think ſo of you too; to be content with every ſtate and condition of life, wherein God does by his Providence place you; to bear wrongs and injuries with meekneſs and patience; not to be overcome with evil, but to overcome evil with good; to mortifie your ſinful deſires and ſenſual appetites; to crucifie the fleſh with the affections and luſts; to purifie your ſelves from all filthineſs of the fleſh and ſpirit;

ſpirit; to cleanſe your hearts from all manner of wickedneſs, that they may be fit Temples for the Spirit of God to dwell in; to govern your eyes, that you may not thereby betray your ſouls into the hands of your enemies; to govern your lips, to take heed to your ways, that you offend not with your tongue; to put away from you all lying, flattery, and diſſimulation, all evil ſpeaking, whiſpering, and back-biting, all fooliſh talking and jeſting, which are not convenient; to be ſober and temperate in all things; to be juſt and ſincere in all your dealings, doing to others what you would have them do to you?

How great a work is it to overcome the World? to deſpiſe its Pomps and Vanities, not to be allured and charmed by its ſmiles, nor yet frighted and caſt down by its frowns; not to ſuffer your ſelves to be poſſeſſed with the love of Riches; to entertain juſt and fit opinions of the things of this World; to conſider them as vain, uncertain, and unſatisfactory enjoyments, which are not capable to make you happy, which are only ſo far to be deſired, as they are neceſſary in order to your

your accommodation and more eaſie ſubſiſtence in the World? How hard is it to overcome the temptations of earthly pleaſure and outward delights, and not to ſuffer your minds to be too far tranſported by the love of them; but to uſe even the moſt innocent pleaſures with great moderation, leſt they lead the Soul captive, and render it unfit for the true pleaſures? How hard is it to live in the World as Pilgrims and Strangers ought to do, to paſs through this Wilderneſs without much regarding it, but fixing your eyes on the happy Land, the heavenly *Canaan*, which you ought to look on as your only Country? How hard is it to eſcape the danger of the evil Manners and Cuſtoms which are in the World? the many temptations which you have to vanity and folly, to pride and paſſion, to gluttony and drunkenneſs, to luxury and ſenſuality, and to other Vices, by the bad Examples of your Friends, Neighbours, and other Acquaintances?

How great and difficult a work is it to reſiſt the Devil, to quench his fiery darts, to reject his ſuggeſtions, to diſcover his wiles and ſtratagems, to watch

watch againſt all his aſſaults, and vigorouſly to oppoſe his temptations, that you may overcome him and triumph over him? Now this is the work you have to do: *For we wreſtle not* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *Eph.* 6. 12.) *againſt fleſh and blood, but againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſs in high places.* How hard and dangerous a Warfare muſt it needs be, that makes it neceſſary for you to take the whole Armour of God, that you may be able to withſtand in the evil day, and having done all, to ſtand?

How hard a work is it to read and hear, and meditate, to examine your ſelves, to pray to God, and to praiſe him, to partake of the holy Sacrament, and to perform all other Acts of Devotion and Piety, as you ought to do?

How great a work is it to love God above all things, to love him with all your Soul and heart, and with all your ſtrength and might, and to keep your ſelves in the Love of God, that it may be in you a powerful Spring and Principle unto all good actions, that you may be thereby ſweetly conſtrained to do and to ſuffer whatever is his holy Will and Pleaſure? Is

Is it not a great work to perform aright all those Duties which you are bound to do in your several relations and capacities? To instruct, to admonish, to reprove, and to comfort others, and to do every thing you can for the good of mens Souls and bodies? *Let no man* (saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 10. 24.) *seek his own, but every man anothers wealth.* And, *Chap.* 13. 5. *Charity seeketh not its own*, that is, not only its own; it seeketh not its own to the prejudice of another, but it endeavours to promote the happiness and welfare of others. The charitable person hath an eye to the good and benefit of other men, as well as his own gain and advantage.

And besides all this, you ought to have so much Zeal for the Glory of God, and the good of Souls, as to endeavour to do somewhat which may have a lasting effect and influence not only in the present time, but in the time to come: You ought to contrive by all means to propagate Religion, to do somewhat which may bear fruit for the honour of your Maker and Redeemer, when you are laid in the Grave.

From

From all which you may ſee what a great and difficult work you have to do in the World, and how great need you have to redeem time, and to loſe as little of it as is poſſible. How neceſſary is it for you to begin your work betimes, and to be conſtant in the purſuit of it, in the morning to ſow your ſeed, and in the evening not to withhold your hand? What a madneſs is it to have your work to begin when your time is almoſt at an end? When there are but a few ſands in your Glaſs? You have ſo long a Race to run, and ſo much bad Way to paſs through, and who are ſo weak, and have ſo little ſtrength to ſtir one foot, to do or ſay, or think any thing that is good, have you not great need to ſet out in good time, and to continue unwearied in your courſe all the day, that you may at laſt receive the glorious prize? Ought you not *(forgetting thoſe things that are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before) to preſs towards the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus*, Phil. 3. 13, 14. Ariſe therefore from your ſloth and lazineſs, and run and be not weary; and walk,

and

and do not faint. Pray to God to hold up your goings in his paths, that your footſteps may not ſlide, to ſtrengthen your weak hands, and confirm your feeble knees, to draw you that you may run after him, and follow him fully. Beg of him, that he may be at your right hand to direct and defend you, that he may perfect his ſtrength in your weakneſs, and may give you in all things both to will and to do, according to his good pleaſure; that when you meet with enemies in your way, he may teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight; and that his Grace may be ſufficient for you.

4. Motive, from the Account you muſt give how you ſpend your Time.

Fourthly, Conſider that you muſt give an account of your time, how you ſpend and employ it. God hath appointed a day wherein he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs by his Son Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, who is to come from Heaven very unexpectedly and ſuddenly in a moſt dreadful and terrible manner, with Power and great Glory, in the Clouds of Heaven, in flaming fire, with ten thouſands of his holy

holy Angels, with a ſhout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God. He ſhall ſend his Angels, and they ſhall gather together his Elect from the four Winds, from one end of Heaven to the other. The Throne ſhall be ſet, and all Nations ſhall be gathered before him. The Books ſhall be opened, and the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be brought to light; the counſels of the heart ſhall be made manifeſt; and every work ſhall be brought into Judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good or bad. There ſhall be no need of Witneſſes againſt the guilty, nor of Racks and Tortures to extort their Confeſſions: Every man's own Conſcience ſhall be inſtead of a thouſand Witneſſes. Then ſhall the Judge paſs Sentence on every man according to his works. The righteous ſhall be abſolved, and ſhall receive the reward of everlaſting Life and Glory: They ſhall be made partakers of a Crown of Glory which fadeth not away, and of a Kingdom that cannot be ſhaken. But the wicked ſhall be caſt into utter darkneſs, where there is weeping and gnaſhing of teeth, where the Worm dieth

not, and where the fire ſhall never be quenched: Where they ſhall continue for ever deprived of the Favour and Love of God, and expoſed to the inſupportable load of his anger and diſpleaſure. You profeſs to believe theſe things, and therefore ought you not ſo to live, and ſo to husband your time, that when the Judge cometh, he may not find you idle, nor doing ſuch things as are to his diſhonour?

You may conceive ſomewhat (tho' but very little) concerning the different thoughts of good and bad men, upon ſuch a ſudden appearance of the Judge. Suppoſe a Prince going into a far Country, ſhould call together his Servants, appointing them ſeverally their work till his return (which he tells them will be unxepected) and promiſing great rewards of Houſes and Lands, and honourable Employments to the faithful and obedient Servants, but threatning ſevere puniſhments, and torments, and a terrible death to the unfaithful and diſobedient. If after his departure ſome of the Servants mind their buſineſs, obſerving as well as they can what their Maſter required them to do: Others, without any regard

regard to his Commands, take no thought of their buſineſs, but are idle, and eat and drink with the drunken, and ſmite their fellow-ſervants, and both by their words and deeds diſhonour their Lord. You may eaſily imagine how differently theſe Servants will be affected when he returns ſuddenly and unexpectedly. The good Servants will be glad and rejoyce at his coming, and will meet him with great chearfulneſs and confidence, as expecting the accompliſhment of his Promiſes, and being conſcious to themſelves of having done their Duty honeſtly and faithfully, of having carried themſelves as they ought to have done during his abſence. But the naughty and wicked Servants muſt needs be filled with ſhame and confuſion upon the Coming of their Lord, ſo as not to be able to look him in the face: There is no other thing which they can do, but to endeavour to fly from his preſence, that they may not fall under the weight of his terrible diſpleaſure.

In this manner our Lord and Maſter Jeſus, before he left the World, gave Rules and Commands to his Servants

how to employ themſelves, and what to do till his return. He promiſed Rewards to all who ſhould believe and obey, and threatned the unbelievers, and the diſobedient with heavy Puniſhments, and moſt dreadful Judgments. When he comes again in the great Day to judge the World, the godly ſhall meet him with great hope and aſſurance, of obtaining the end of their Faith, even the Salvation of their Souls. But the wicked and unbelievers ſhall be full of horrour and confuſion, and ſhall cry to the mountains to fall on them, to hide them from the face of their Judge, who will be a conſuming fire to all the workers of iniquity, and will in no wiſe clear the guilty.

Now do you deſire heartily and ſincerely to eſcape everlaſting Condemnation, and to obtain a glorious Reward in the Day of your Accounts? Then you muſt ſtudy to redeem the time, and to make uſe of all opportunities of doing good: You muſt not be ſlothful in your great buſineſs, but fervent in Spirit, ſerving the Lord, knowing that your labour ſhall not be in vain in the Lord. You ſee how the men of the World beſtir themſelves

when

when there is but a ſmall appearance and probability of gain and advantage. The Merchants make uſe of every favourable opportunity to buy and ſell; they go early to Market, that they may not loſe a good occaſion; and yet after all they may be, and are frequently diſappointed, and make a very bad bargain. But the Chriſtian, who redeems his time to buy Wiſdom, is ſure to find it. *They who ſeek me early, ſhall find me*, Prov. 8. 17.

The Mariners wait for a favourable Gale, a fair and ſeaſonable Wind to go to Sea: And when it blows according to their wiſhes, they are ſure not to loſe one moment. Their deſire of gain, and their hopes of a proſperous Voyage, makes them venture. And yet after all they may and often do ſuffer ſhipwrack, and loſe their goods and their lives too. But the Chriſtian who redeems his time, is in no ſuch danger; he is ſure to arrive ſafely at the Harbour of everlaſting Reſt, after all the ſtorms and tempeſts which he meets with in the boiſterous Sea of this World.

The Husbandmen wait for a good ſeaſon to plough and ſow, and to do

all other things belonging to their Employment; and when the time is favourable, they are sure to make use of it. The desire and hopes they have of a Harvest, of a fruitful Crop, quickens their endeavours, and excites their industry. And yet after all, they may be disappointed. Their Corn may be drowned by violent Rains, or scorched and burnt up with violent Heat, or eaten up and consumed by Insects, Fowls, or Beasts. But the Christian who *sows in tears, shall reap in joy*, Psal. 126. 5, 6.

You see that men, who run a Race, strive with great earnestness to gain the Prize, to obtain that, which oft-times is of no very great value. And yet some of those who run come behind, and are disappointed of their hopes. But the Christian runs not uncertainly; he is sure to *obtain not a corruptible Crown, but an incorruptible*, 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Again, you see that men who besiege a City or a Castle, wait for all advantages, and are sure not to neglect a favourable occasion of making an Assault, and surprising the Enemy. The hopes of getting rich Spoils, of

gaining Honour and Renown, makes them reſolute and valiant. And yet it often happens, that they loſe their lives in the Attempt; or are taken captive by thoſe whom they did hope to overcome and ſubdue. But he who fights the good fight of Faith, is ſure to lay hold on eternal Life. He who fights under Chriſt's Banner, and who has him for his Captain, is ſure to obtain the Victory over all his Enemies.

I ſhall conclude this Diſcourſe with what is written by St. *Peter*, 2 *Epiſt. Chap.* 3. *verſ.* 10, 11, &c. *The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the Earth alſo, and the works that are therein, ſhall be burnt up. Seeing then that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved, what manner of perſons ought you to be in all holy converſation and godlineſs; Looking for, and haſtening unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the Heavens being on fire ſhall be diſſolved, and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheleſs we, according to his promiſe, look for new Heavens, and a* *The Concluſion.*

new Earth, wherein dwelleth righteouſneſs. Wherefore (beloved) ſeeing that ye look for ſuch things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without ſpot, and blameleſs.

FINIS.

ADVICE

TO

PARENTS.

ADVICE
TO
CHILDREN.